

THE WISDOM OF  
THE UPANISHATS  
BY  
ANNIE BESANT

1907

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# THE WISDOM OF THE UPANISHATS

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ANNIE BESANT

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FOUR LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE THIRTY-FIRST ANNIVERSARY MEETING

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## FOREWORD

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Little need be said in sending out this booklet to the world. It is an attempt, a very humble attempt, to draw a few drops from the ancient wells of Aryan wisdom, and to offer them to quench the thirst of weary souls, travelling through the desert, seeking for Truth. The Upanishats are unique in the sacred literature of the world. They stand alone as beacon-lights on mountain-peak, showing how high man may climb, how much of the Light of the Self may shine out through the vessel of clay, how truly God may speak through man. To speak on them, to write on them, seems presumption for such a one as myself, and yet it may be that help will come to some of my brethren even in this way.

The translations are my own, but will, I think, be found as accurate, though less wooden, than those known in the West. One word I have deliberately left un-translated – tapas. There is no one English word which expresses its meaning; the various translations given: austerity, penance, asceticism, devotion – all are in it, but it is more than all of these. It is from the root tap, burn. Heat is in it, burning force, all-consuming. The fire of thought is in it, the fire which creates. The fire of desire is in it, the fire which devours. It may be defined as “a sustained strenuous physical activity, sternly controlled and directed by the will to a given end, and dominated by concentrated thought ष त्प. By tapas Brahma created worlds; by tapas Vishnu won his lofty rank; by tapa Maha-deva became the Jagat-Guru. By tapas every Rshi won his superhuman powers, and forced boons from the hands of even unwilling Devas. So I have kept the word in its original form, and it will gradually become part of the theosophical vocabulary, as karma and dharma are already.

So let the little book go forth on its mission, and win some to the study of its source.

ANNIE BESANT

Benares, 1907

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## FIRST LECTURE. BRAHMAN IS ALL

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Brothers:

I cannot begin speaking today – the first Convention at which I have ever begun to deliver a lecture without our beloved President-Founder at my side – I cannot begin without sending to his sick-room a message of love, a message of reverent sympathy, to that most loyal, most faithful servant of the Blessed Masters, who for one-and-thirty-years has carried the banner of the Society unwaveringly, in spite of every difficulty, of every trouble, of friends who have betrayed, of enemies who have attacked, but who has never wavered, never, faltered, never been shaken in his loyalty to Them. And so may They be with him, may They receive him, when he passes from us into a fairer life.

Last year I spoke to you about the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, the text-book of the Bhakta, the devotee, in the world. This year I am going to strive to speak to you about the essence of the Upanishats, the textbook of the Jnani. These books, the most wondrous part of the wondrous Veda, these books, which contain the Vedanta, the end, the purpose of the Veda, these are to be our study for some brief hours. They tell us of Brahman – the God of the Universe, of Man: the nature of God, the nature of the Universe, the nature of Man; and they treat of these great fundamental truths in the most abstract, philosophic, metaphysical sense. They only descend into the concrete in order to give some illustration, some simile, something to render more luminous the exposition of thoughts that escape, that may be lost, by their very subtlety, thoughts almost too lofty for the mind of man to grasp. Herein, in this small volume, so small in compass but so vast in content, in this is given everything that words can give of the very essence of the Brahma-Vidya, the Divine Wisdom, Theosophy. I say, as much as words can give; for even through the Upanishats it is only possible to give the Brahma-Vidya in the form of intellectual exposition. Nothing else may words do. The true Brahma-Vidya, the knowledge of the Self, that is no matter for words, no matter for teaching. That cannot be given even by divinest Teacher to aptest pupil. It cannot be communicated by mouth to ear, from mind to mind, nay, even from Self to Self. Other initiations may be given upon wisdom's splendid way, initiations well-nigh incredible in their beauty; but this supremest initiation into the knowledge of the Self must be taken by each Self for itself, when it is ready to open out into the fulness of its own Divinity. None else may give it; none else may impart it; only Brahman within can know Brahman without. So that the last, the final, the most lofty initiation is Self-taken. None else may give it, nor may any withhold it.

And that Brahma-Vidya, what is it? It is the central truth of the Upanishats. It is the identity in nature of the Universal and the Particular Self; Tattvamasi, THAT thou art. Such is the final truth, such the goal of all wisdom, of all devotion, of all right activity: THAT thou art. Nothing less than that is the Wisdom of the Upanishats; nothing more than that – for more than that there is not. That is the last truth of all truths; that the final experience of all experiences.

Not long ago, reading in a great English review, [*Hibbert Journal*. Oct 1906. *Loc cit*. By William Tally Seeger] I came across an article called: The Vital Value in the Hindu God-idea, and in this it is remarked, and remarked quite truly: It is doubtful if in any other country than India so large a proportion of the reverently high-minded have agreed – and acted accordingly – that the greatest and eventually happiest use to which they could apply themselves was the assiduous seeking and the intrepid finding of God, all else in life being accounted as subordinate in importance. Now the writer there does not exaggerate. That is the central thought of the Hindu mind, and the result of that is very remarkable. For because of this, because of the

identity in nature of the Universal and the Particular Self as stated in that Mahavakya which I quoted: Tattvamasi, THAT thou art, the knowledge of Brahman, of God, is possible for man. If it were not so. you might have belief, you might have argument, you might have reasoning, you might have a reasonable probability; but you could not have knowledge.

For it is the law of nature, if you look around you on the world outside, that you can only know that to which you can answer by your body, or your mind, as it may be. You can only know that which you share. If you can see, you only see because within the eye is vibrating the ether whose vibrations outside you are light. If you can hear, it is only because within your ear vibrate the air and the ether which outside yourself make sound. It is only when you have in yourself, in your own body, the same which is outside you, that you can know. How then should you know the universal Spirit, were it not that you share His nature in yourself? Because He is in you, you can know Him without you. Because, as the Upanishats declare, Brahman is the Akasha that surrounds you, and also the same Akasha within the heart, therefore can you know, and not only believe. And so the article, that I was just quoting, goes on to press this very point of the possibility of knowledge: ८ To the educated Hindu ८, the writer says, ८ the most significant attribute of self-conscious beings is their subjectivity. He habitually maintains that the idea of God, is always presented to the mind in the very same act as the idea of self. Plainly, the inference here is that God is to be found, not by means of any objective use of the mind; not by the ontological, nor the cosmological, nor the teleological argument ८ – all the arguments that are used in the West to prove the existence of God – ८ but by penetrating all the mental strata with which mankind's civilising processes have overlaid man's diviner nature ८. That, he says, is the value in the Hindu God-idea. There is only one consciousness, and that is God-consciousness. The unfolding of consciousness anywhere is the unfolding of the God-consciousness. It may be in the mightiest Deva that rules a solar system, and sends his radiance throbbing over countless millions of miles in space. It may be the consciousness that is sleeping in the grain of sand, that the wind lifts up and tosses hither and thither, as too light to resist it. All is God-consciousness, for there is none other. And as consciousness unfolds from the grain of sand to the plant, from the plant to the animal, from the animal to the man, from the man to the Deva, it is only God unfolding His hidden powers in the sheaths of matter, in which He wills to hide Himself from the eyes of flesh. There is nothing else, for ८ Brahman is All ८. There is no consciousness save His consciousness, thrilling through furthest space, living in the tiniest atom; and as we realise this, the question so often heard in the West: ८ Is there a God? ८ loses all its meaning. The question so often heard in the East: ८ Why did Brahman bring universes into existence? ८ loses all its meaning. There is nothing else but Brahman. He is all and the Universe is in Him. Its manifestation is only a manifestation of Himself. There is nothing there which was not there before, nothing in addition to Himself. Beings in the universe think there is something different, ८ Myself and Him ८, but there is only He, unchangeable. It is not He *and* a universe, but He *as* a universe. It is not a question of creation, of addition. And as we see this we begin to understand the marvel of some of the passages in the Upanishat where it is said that you cannot prove by demonstration, by any reasoning, the existence of the Self. On this there is no paltering, there is no doubt, there is no evasion. It is written: ८ Nor may this Self be obtained by teaching, nor by intelligence, nor by repeated hearing ..... Nor may this Self be obtained by the strengthless, nor by heedlessness, nor by tapas nor even by the absence of qualities. ८ [Mundaka III, ii 3, 4] The *Mandukyopanishat* speaks even yet more strongly, for it declares that the Self is ८ invisible, unarguable, intangible, undefined, inconceivable, ineffable ८. [Loc. cit. 7] Is it then true that there is no proof? Ah no!. I have not finished the line; not to be attained by teaching, by reasoning, nor by anything outside yourself: ८ Whose one sure proof is the Self ८, and that proof is within you. That is the only proof: the Self. But that is enough. For our Self is to each of us the surest of all sure things, the most certain of all

certainties, the most stable of all stabilities; such is the Self, the Self within you and within me. You doubt your Self? but you cannot. No proof can make it stronger; no proof can shake the certainty of your own existence. In the very effort to disprove your Self, it is your Self that weighs the disproof. It is beyond reason. Why? Not because it is unreasonable, but because it is the basis from which all reasoning starts. This is the real faith, the true Shraddha, this unshakable certainty of the existence of the Self within us; and therefore faith is said to be beyond reason, and not to rest on reason, nor on knowledge. It is above and beyond them all. No man can doubt the reality of his own existence, and in that God-existence is affirmed. And therefore it is written that this is the one sure proof, the Self.

Now if this certainty of the existence of the Self *in its divine nature* is to be reached, there is but one method: meditation and noble living. षुः This Self must verily षुः, it is written, षुः be obtained by constancy in truth, in tapas in perfect knowledge, in celibacy षुः. [Mundaka III i. 5] Perfect righteousness, perfect dispassion, perfect intelligence, perfect self-control. These are the ways by which the proof of Deity, which is the consciousness of the Divinity of the Self within us, is to be found.

But, strictly speaking, these are only supports, adjuncts, ways of destroying obstacles, and not the true realising of the Self. For Moksha, liberation, which is the knowledge, or realisation, of the Self, is not a thing to be attained, as some men idly dream. It is yours already, because you are divine, only you know it not. As a man might own a pearl of priceless value and, hanging it round his neck upon his heart, might forget that he had placed it there, might think that he had lost it, might search in the hope of finding it, might turn out pocket after pocket, tear off cloth after cloth, wildly run about looking for it, saying: षुः I have lost my pearl, where is it? षुः so with the search for the Self in the outer world. The man is looking for his pearl where it is not. It is with him, close to his heart, and all you have to do to help him to find it is not to search, but to say: षुः See your pearl is on your own body, and there is no search needed षुः. It is always there, and so also is Moksha always with us. We have only to destroy the obstacles that prevent us from realising our own Divinity, and we are free. The separateness that you dream of is Maya, illusion; there is no separateness; you are one, one Self, the Supreme, the Universal. Therefore it is said that Moksha is not gained by works. Turn your eyes within you, not without you, for of such an inward gazer it is written: षुः By the calm of the senses he beholds the majesty of the Self षुः. [Katha ii 20]

Think what that means to the world. Men are always afraid of the advance of knowledge in one direction or another. Criticism, the Higher Criticism, so feared by many religious men, what does it matter? What can criticism do? It can only destroy books; it cannot destroy the Self. The Higher Criticism, of which Europe talks so much, can tear books to pieces. Books however sacred however dear, however ancient, it may perhaps be able to tear them to pieces. But what then? It cannot tear the Self to pieces. The proof of the Self is within us, not without us, not in books, however holy, however well-beloved. The books have grown out of the Self; it can produce other books; the books are only the fruitage of the Self, unfolding in its Divinity in man; and whatever the books may be, they are not the ground-work of our faith. Criticism cannot touch the Self, of whom the proof is within us.

And Science, what can that do? Let science pierce to the furthest star; Brahman is beyond that which is beyond. Let science analyse the minutest atom; Brahman is minuter than the atom. What then can Science do? It can only find out some new beauties of Brahman in a world which is nothing but the Supreme. Let it search as it will; let it speak as it may: षुः Truth alone conquers and not falsehood षुः. [Mundaka III i. 6] And Science will grow out of its errors, and understand the Universe, which is Brahman. It can find nothing which can disprove THAT which



is all. This Truth – Brahman is All – is the Magna Carta of intellectual freedom. Let a man think; let a man speak. Never mind if he makes errors; further knowledge will lead him right. He cannot wander outside the Self, for the Self is everywhere. He cannot lose the Self, for the Self is within him. Let the intellect soar as it will, upwards and upwards as far as its wings can beat; still far beyond its powers,. far across its piercing, North and South and East and West and Zenith and Nadir, Brahman stretches everywhere, the illimitable Self. Intellect cannot go outside the Self, of which it is a manifestation; it cannot therefore shake the eternal certainty of Selfexistence.

It is this, the central Truth of the Upanishats, of which you and I should strive in these brief days to understand something, though very little; something we are to learn of this all-pervading Truth; a Truth which cannot dazzle us, however radiant, however brilliant, however glorious, for we are of its nature, we are its rays, its light is ours. Is it not then fitting that we should try to train our minds into harmony with this one Truth, and pray that that ॐ Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world ॐ [S. John i. 9] may shine from within us and without us, that we too may see?

हिरण्यमयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखं  
सर्वं पुषन्नपावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ।

ॐ Pūshan, O 'All-Sustainer, open thou the mouth of Truth, now hidden by a golden veil, that we, the votaries of Truth, may see. ॐ [Bṛhadāraṇyaka V. xv. 1]

The consciousness of the Self, God-consciousness, Brahman-consciousness, is reflected in three forms in the Universe. The three are summed up in what is called the fourth, though truly the fourth is the summation of the three, merged into the One Reality. Hence we read regarding this three and the One which is the fourth: ॐ It, that Self, the supreme syllable , ॐ the measureless feet the parts, the parts the feet, the letters A U M ॐ, [ *Mandukya* 8] the three parts.

The partless Aum, the one syllable, is the partless Brahman, the Nirguna Brahman, the summation: ॐ The fourth ॐ, goes on the *Mandukyopanishat*, ॐ His partless, actionless, manifestation at rest, blissful, without duality; thus the Aum is indeed the Self ॐ, [ *Loc. cit.* 12] for it shews [shows] both its triplicity and its unity.

The letters taken separately, the A, the U, the M, are no longer one syllable, but three. What do they mean? The *Mandukyopanishat* tells us that these are the three states of consciousness. Now there are many meanings for these three letters, for wherever a trinity is found these letters may symbolise its parts; and tomorrow we shall see that, according to the Upanishats, these three letters may be taken as symbolising Ishvara Himself, His Maya, and His relation to His work. We shall take them just now as three states of Being, types of consciousness, Brahman reflected in the world, and the *Mandukyopanishat* tells us what these states are. After saying that: ॐ This All verily Brahman; this Self Brahman; he, this Self, is fourfold ॐ. the Upanishat goes on to give the three reflexions in the world of manifestation, the fourth, as just said, being ॐ manifestation at rest ॐ. These three are: [ *Loc cit* 2-5, 9-11] Vaishvanara, the waking consciousness; that which you and I are using now, sometimes called the Vital Self, or Vital Soul; we may perhaps call it the Pranaatma, the personal self, that which exists whenever there is consciousness embodied in physical matter; that is Vaishvanara,. the all-pervading; Vaishvanara is the letter A. Then, there exists in the subtler worlds the Taijasa, or super-waking,

consciousness, which western psychologists call the *वृषदृषdream-consciousness वृषक* – an awkward and misleading phrase, by no means the equivalent of the *वृषवृषvapna वृषक* of the Easterns, who mean by *वृष वृषvapna वृषक* a state higher and more real than the waking consciousness, whereas no Western regards what he calls *वृषदृषdream वृषक* as higher and more real than the waking state – existing in all subtle worlds, however many, the individualised Self, the Jivatma, the Monad. That is the second stage of the God-consciousness; Taijasa is the letter U. And the third, as it is revealed in its utmost splendor in the highest world of all, the God-world, where Ishvara Himself unfolds His powers, that is the Prajna; He is all-knowing, perfect in knowledge, Ishvara, the Ruler, the Director, the All-Sustainer, the Saguna Brahman, the Supreme, the Pratyagatma, the Antaratma, of all; that is the third state, and is the letter M. These divisions are adopted for this course of lectures: the partless Brahman, or the All; then the loftiest manifestation, which truly is Brahman Himself manifesting with attributes, the Saguna, the Supreme Ishvara; thirdly the Jivatmas, scattered through all the worlds wherein consciousness exists – and all is consciousness – and then fourthly the manifestation that I have called the Pranatma, the vital self, the ordinary waking consciousness of man, of beasts, of plants, of stones, in the wheel of births and deaths, of all that is. All this is the manifestation of the One, and is summed up in the One. Hence we find it said in the *Shvetashvataropanishat*: *वृष* This verily is chanted as the supreme Brahman, in whom the three, well-established and indestructible...This should be known as eternal, as Self-established; verily there is naught further to be known. The enjoyer [the Jivatma], the objects of enjoyment, [the Maya of the universe] and the Director [Ishvara], being known, the All is declared as this threefold Brahman. *वृषक* [Loc cit, i, 7, 12] These are summed up in One – the A, the U, the M, pronounced as one syllable – are Brahman.

Now this way of dealing with what are called Sacred Words is familiar to every student of antiquity. If you take the *Chandogyopanishat*, over and over again, you find words reduced to three letters, each letter significant, and the whole containing some great truth. [See *loc. cit*, VIII iii 5, etc] And this fashion of constructing words is not confined to the Upanishats. It is found in all the great religions of the past. Egypt had it; Syria had it; the ancient Hebrews had it; the Gnostics had it. A letter is taken which conveys a meaning; others are added, each having a meaning; the whole word made of these letters is called a Sacred Word, or a Word of Power, Truly Words of Power are they, for they are not pronounced by the lips merely, but by the unfolding consciousness, and as it realises one truth after another, and, as it realises each becomes that truth and is Lord of it, it rules. Such words are well-known as existing by all Free Masons, even if the meaning be lost to their Masters.

The results which follow from this Word of Power, the Aum, are the mightiest, the most compelling, for that Word represents in its three letters everything which exists – the threefold Brahman as manifest, the One as unmanifest; when pronounced as a triplicity, it means the threefold manifested Brahman, and when pronounced as a unit, it means the Nirguna Brahman. Hence is it the most holy of all Sacred Words.

Let us now take the evidence that the Upanishats give us that Brahman is All. First we take the definite statement made in the *Chhandogyopanishat*: *वृषवृषAum*, verily, this All. Aum, verily this All *वृषक*. [Loc cit II, xxiii, 3 (in some editions 4) ] We have seen that Aum means the partless Brahman; we see now that it means the All. The *Taittiriyanopanishat* puts the two statements into a single sentence: *वृषवृषAum* is Brahman; Aum is this All. *वृषक* [ Loc cit, I, viii] Inasmuch as two things which are identical with a third thing are identical with each other, Brahman and the All are identical. Such is the testimony of the Ancient Wisdom. There is no difference. There is nothing else. Brahman and the All are one and the same thing.

One other truth regarding this wondrous Word is spoken out by another – Upanishat: ॐ Satyakama, this Aum twofold, the Supreme and the Lower Brahman ॐ [Prashna v 2] – the Para-Brahman and the Apara-Brahman. All the mystery lies hidden herein. What means this – the higher, the lower; the supreme, the inferior ? The Upanishat goes on to explain that when the letters are taken separately, then the worlds, the Apara or lower, Brahman, are indicated; and when the word is pronounced as one syllable, then the Para, or supreme, Brahman is denoted.

Thus also says Yama to Nachiketas, expounding this mystery of the Two, who yet are One. He declares: ॐ This syllable verily Brahman, this syllable verily the Supreme ॐ [Katha ii 16] and Shri Shankara, commenting upon that, points out that the first syllable means the ॐ inferior Brahman ॐ, the second means the ॐ supreme Brahman ॐ.

We turn again to the *Chhandogyopanishat* in order to learn more of this mystery which is the All: ॐ Verily ॐ, it is written, ॐ this All is Brahman; therefrom it is born, thereinto it is dissolved, thereby it is maintained ॐ. [Loc cit III xiv i] Of Brahman made manifest, the first factor of the Apara Brahman, the Self, the Purusha, it is written: ॐ He is established in the supreme, imperishable Self. ॐ [Prashna iv 3]

Perhaps the best simile would be to take your own mind, and to think of the thoughts that arise in it, as a manifested Universe in Brahman, the All. In the mind all its thoughts are contained; from it they are born, and into it they vanish. In Brahman universes arise in endless succession, a chain that has no beginning and no end. Unchangeable, because all-inclusive; everything is therein, literally everything; all that ever was in the past, all that is in the present, all that shall be in the future, all that is conceivable, all that is imaginable, everything which can be, resides in that immeasurable All; there is nothing else. Absolute, because there is nothing else with which THAT can be in relation. There *is* nothing else but Brahman. Out of that immeasurable fulness, as waves out of an ocean, universes arise; and as waves smooth down again into the ocean, universes disappear. All that has been, that is, is ever there, in unchangeable reality of life. All that ever may be sleeps therein, in that boundless bosom of universal fatherhood. There is naught else. Everything is there in one simultaneous unchangeable reality of everpresent living. And so the wise have said that all opposites are therein, in order to force the human mind to realise that nothing is left out, that there is nought outside THAT, that there is nothing else. You cannot speak of a universe as being made, as though it had not ever been, for all is in THAT which changes not. All opposites find therein their reconciliation, their mutual destruction; all opposites there merge into each other, for THAT is all, and there is none other.

Dwell upon this thought until it becomes familiar. Make it part of your mind. Try to conceive it in many different ways. You may, for instance, take it in the way that science sees the universe; it tells us of a boundless universe; further and further and further systems are found, and the stronger the telescope, the greater is the distance of the furthest star. Go further and further yet, beyond that furthest star that science sees with the strongest telescope; the infinite Brahman stretches beyond with unknown possibilities, endless possibilities of manifestation; there is neither beginning nor ending to Brahman; there is no beyond. Think it over, till the mind grows dizzy. Think it over, till some effect of immensity is felt. All that is but the fulness of the ever-upwelling manifestation of existence. And remember that THAT *ever is*; it does not *become*. Universes become. They are born forth, but that ETERNAL is one unchangeable; THAT knows no present, no past, no future, for All IS, and All is Brahman. Let the depth and the splendor of that thought dwell in the mind till it becomes part of your veriest Self, and you can think of nothing as outside THAT which is. I dare not use the word exists; and in a moment you will see why that word, so natural to use in this connexion, does not pass through my lips. We can only say It is,

not that It exists. ८ The Universe, all this whatever moves in, emanates from Life. ८ [Katha vi 2] And some similes are given: ८ As a spider throws out and in-draws his threads; as from the earth herbs are produced; as hairs from the living man; thus this Universe becomes from the Imperishable ८. [Mundaka I i 7] ८ As from a blazing fire, go forth by thousands sparks of its own nature, so from the Imperishable, O beloved, manifold existences are born forth, and thereinto also verily return. ८ [Ibid II i I] ८ In the imperishable Brahman lie latent both wisdom and ignorance-perishable verily ignorance, wisdom verily immortal - He who ruleth wisdom and ignorance, He, verily, is another. ८ [Shvetashvatara v I]

What grows out of this? That beyond the manifested Universe, beyond the God concealed within it, there is pure Being, abstract Being, say rather Be-ness, as H. P. B. called it. Listen to the wondrous words of the *Chhandogyopanishat'*. ८ At first, O beloved, was verily this pure existence, one in truth, secondless. They say: Before that verily was pure non-existence, one, in truth, secondless; from that non-existence was born existence. ८ [Chhandogya VI ii I] That is why H. P. B. used the word ८ Beness ८, and not ८ Being ८. Pure Be-ness is THAT in which all is, eternal, changeless, absolute, simultaneous, the mighty ocean whence existence is born. For the word existence comes from the Latin *ex-sistere*, out-being, the being that is manifested, the being that is born forth, so to say. From this All, this non-existence, existence, life, comes forth. IT IS, and when you have said that, all is said.

How then may we speak of It ? How may we express It? How may we define It? THAT which is everything, without parts, indivisible, non-existence giving forth existence? ८ Thither the eye goeth not, the voice goeth not, nor mind. We know not, nor distinguish, how THAT may be taught. Different indeed THAT from the known, beyond the unknown. Thus have we heard from the Elders, they who instructed us. That which existeth not by the voice, but THAT by which the voice existeth, THAT know thou as Brahman, not this which is worshipped as this. THAT which thinketh not with the mind, but by which the mind thinketh, THAT know thou as Brahman, not this which is worshipped as this. THAT which seeth not by the eye, but by which the eye seeth, THAT know thou as Brahman, not this which is worshipped as this. THAT which heareth not by the ear, but by which the ear heareth, THAT know thou as Brahman, not this which is worshipped as this. THAT which liveth not by the life, but by which the life liveth, THAT know thou as Brahman, not this which is worshipped as this. ८ [Kena i 3 – 8]

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## SECOND LECTURE. ÎSHVARA

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Brothers:

We have today to deal with a subject which in some ways is more difficult than the subject of yesterday. By an effort and a strain of the mind it is possible to recognise intellectually at least the great truth that Brahman is All. But when you come to deal with the question of manifestation, when you come to endeavor to realise intellectually what is meant by the coming of existence out of non-existence, of being from non-being, then you have a problem so difficult that even the text-book of the Jnani shrinks from explanation. For we find that when it is said: How can this be? when the pupil asks the teacher: How can being come forth from non-being? the teacher does not try to explain, but only reiterates the truth, and adds: It willed: ' May I become many, may I be born, [Chhandogya VI ii 1-3] Now why is that? Why is there no effort at explanation, where surely explanation, if such there may be, is above all to be looked for? I think the reason is this: that none may hope to understand by the exertion of the intellect, by the use of the reason pure and simple, this final mystery. The spiritual intuition is necessary, and an insight that goes beyond the power of Manas, the mind, and calls into activity, Buddhi, as the vehicle of the Self; and the truth is, that you will never understand these high and final truths by any amount of teaching or study: you can only understand them by meditation, in which the glory of the Self is seen. And all that I can hope to do for you, my brothers and fellow-students, is to put before you that which I have gathered out of a study of these wondrous writings, and out of meditation, leaving you to find out for yourselves, in your own meditation, how far what I say in words is true to truth, and how far the limitation of the speaker makes untrue the truth which feeble lips endeavor – not to speak but – to stammer; for truly articulate speech in these regions is impossible for me to compass. So I can only do my best, leaving you to judge; and I pray you to remember here, as in everything that is taught from a theosophical platform, that the teacher has no authority to impose his own thought on the minds of other thinkers, but is only a fellow-student, to whom the gift of speech, perchance, has come; each has the right, nay, the duty, to think for himself; each has the responsibility of forming his own judgment.

So we take up our study from that phrase I quoted yesterday, and re-quote today: From nonexistence came forth existence. Now the words in the Samskrit are: From Asat Sat was born, and that reminds us of a principle which it is well for us to remember: that of all these root words there are two fundamental meanings; one very very high, in the worlds where words are not needed to express the truth, and the other lower down; and the greatness and depth of the meaning above correspond to the limitation and shallowness of the meaning below. Asat is such a word, and Tamas is such another word. And perhaps it may be easier for you to recognise the truth of this view if put in connexion with Tamas. For it is said in a very well-known book – I will not say an authoritative work, though it has much of the authority of knowledge – it is said that all comes forth from Tamas, and all into Tamas returns. Tamas here is not the lower Tamas, one of the three Gunas, but is that moveless Inertia, that perfect Stillness, in which the three Gunas are balanced one against the other, in perfect equilibrium. When that equilibrium of the Gunas is disturbed, all comes forth. But you must not confuse with that equilibrium, the higher Tamas as, the meaning that we down here give to Tamas, to the inertia of physical matter, or the sloth which is man's greatest enemy, which he must overcome if he would find the Self. So subtle is the connotation of words, where words are inadequate to express great meanings, and we have to be on our guard lest, in using the words, we mislead the listeners into taking the lower for the higher.

One protection we have in those high words, the Words of Power of which I spoke yesterday, for they can put the thing in a way which can be intuited, but which loses much as to its accuracy when we explain out the meaning in detailed sentences. The greatest of all Words of Power, the Pranava, the single syllable, you remember, means the Nirguna Brahman. But the same syllable, spoken as a triplicity, means the Saguna Brahman. What does that indicate? That it is the same, and not another. But that the shewing [showing] forth of the attributes makes an external difference. Where the one is without attributes, the triple is spoken of as Sat, Chit, Ananda, Existence, Consciousness, Bliss. The First Being is the Saguna Brahman. I might quote a number of shlokas where three great attributes are taken as expressing THAT which is beyond all reach of words. Now think that over in your meditation and try to catch the meaning – the one syllable, the Nirguna; the *same word* with a difference, three syllables, the Saguna; and that may guide you to some little glimpse of the mystery before us: how the One becomes the Three, The same, and yet, by the presence of the manifested qualities, different.

And what is the difference ? An internal difference: That in which the opposites appear, and in appearing annihilate each other and vanish, that is the One; That in which they appear as opposites, and remain as such, that is the Three. The ultimate antitheses of *ex*-istence are Ishvara and Maya. Let us pause a moment thereupon and see how far the Upanishats help us herein. ँ ः From non-existence was born existence. ँ ः The *Taittiriyaopanishat* repeats the saying, and tells us of the Born, the Being, the Existence: ँ ः He, verily, is the embodied Self of THAT ँ ः. [*Taittiriya* II vi I] The embodied Self of the Nirguna Brahman is the Saguna Brahman. But in that very phrase, ँ ः embodied Self ँ ः, you get the first difference appearing, which is necessary for the out-being, the *ex*-istence. Hence the difference, because He is an embodiment of the essence of the all; and even then the ँ ः Body ँ ः is itself ever unmanifest, because concealed and hidden, although, in the highest metaphysical sense, it is manifest, because qualities are declared. So again the same Upanishat speaks of Brahman as ँ ः Truth, Wisdom, Infinity ँ ः. [*Loc cit i*]

And listen to the words in which the Brhadaranyaka tries to bring the mystery within the grip of words.

ॐ ः Infinite That, Infinite This; from the Infinite the Infinite arises; taking the Infinite from the Infinite, the

Infinite verily remains. Aum is the ether, is Brahman. ँ ः [*Loc cit II i I*] This marvellous passage shows

you how feeble are human words; and yet the words, meditated on, may help you to an appreciation of

the truth. There is no difference, for two Infinities cannot be; and yet, the fact of manifestation with

attributes makes an apparent difference where truly there is none, difference and sameness in the One.

Another shloka helps us: ँ ः Two-bodied is Brahman ँ ः – the Saguna, the Apara Brahman –

ॐ ः formed and formless, mortal and immortal, stable and unstable, manifest and beyond ँ ः. [*Brhadar*

II iii I] There is a well-known shloka in the *Bhagavadgita* that may help us, and you may remember that I pointed out that shloka particularly, last year, where Shri Krishna is explaining this great mystery. He speaks of His lower nature that is, Prakrti; then He speaks of His higher nature, Daivi Prakrti, that is, divine substance and then he says that higher than that is another higher. He speaks of the manifest and unmanifest, and then: Higher than that unmanifested another unmanifested, eternal, which, in the destroying of all beings is not destroyed. [Loc cit viii 20] There you have the same idea. There is the hidden Self, the higher, unmanifested, formless, immortal, stable, beyond, the letter A of the Pranava. There is a manifest that we see around us, the second body of Saguna Brahman, the formed, the mortal, the unstable, the manifest – the letter U – and between those two, the link which joins them, the lower unmanifested, the loftier body, the Daivi Prakrti, the Relation between Spirit and Matter, between mortal and immortal, between changeless and changing, which makes possible this Universe; and that remains as constant as the Universe, for without it, the Universe cannot be. That is the third letter of the three-syllabled Aum, the M which creates and destroys. And so again it is written: Perishable the world-stuff (Pradhana) imperishable, immortal, is Hara. He, the one God, rules the perishable and the Self [Shvetashvatara i 10] – the first embodiment of the Self, the Relation established by His thought between Himself and Maya. Let us pause a moment on that, and try to realise what we have found to be the meaning of the three-lettered Aum in the Upanishats, the meaning of the A, the U, and the M.

The A is the first of all letters, the letter without the pronouncement of which the uttering of any letter is impossible. Every consonant in the Samskrit implies the presence of it. You cannot sound another consonant without sounding that, however softly, however much below your breath. Nothing can be spoken into which it does not enter. Therefore A is the Self, in the triple Aum, for without the Self there can be no manifestation, no existence. Nothing can exist in which the Self is not present, however latent, however concealed, nor is there aught, moving, or unmoving, that may exist bereft of me. [Bhagavadgita x 39]

Then comes the second letter U; what is that? You have heard in the shlokas I have read; it is the Pradhana, Matter, the Not-Self, to give it its best name, since we only know it by thinking of the Self. As we realise what the Self is, we deny its qualities to its opposite, and that is Matter reached by denial, not by affirmation. The fundamental idea of matter is: It is not the Self. These are the two great antitheses, the northern and southern poles, between which the web of the Universe is woven. Father, Mother, H. P. Blavatsky calls them; and between the Father, the life-giver, and the Mother, the recipient, the form gathers which is the Son; the web of the Universe is woven – to use a graphic expression of an Upanishat [Brhadar III vi] – backwards and forwards between them. The web begins by the Father uniting Himself to the Mother by the declaration: I am This; then the emanation that is the Son appears; and when He repudiates His Son and says: I am not this, disuniting Himself from the Mother, then the Son disappears; for he can only live where the Father affirms his existence, and when that affirmation becomes negation he vanishes. [Aham-etat-na: I-this-not] Then Ishvara and Maya rebecome one, and there is nothing manifest, for Ishvara cannot appear without Maya, nor Maya without Ishvara. They are mutually interdependent, for though He always is, He is not manifest save where He thinks Maya, and so makes the possibility of manifestation. Thus treading our way through this great difficulty, we find the meaning of our Word of Power; A is the Self; U is the Not-Self, and M, in which all affirmation and negation are summed up, is the changing declaration: Let me be many, and There is naught but I. The answer to the Let me be many is the appearance of the many, the world, the universe.

Now the affirmation of union, which emanates, is declared in the *Shvetashvataropanisat*: there it is said: ॐ United with Maya He emanates this Universe [*Loc cit* iv 9] [Page 31] and in the *Brhadaranyaka*, where it is declared: ॐ He said first: ' I am This ॐ; [*Loc cit* I iv I] again: ॐ He knew: I am verily this emanation' ॐ [*Loc cit* I iv 5] (I am translating the word ॐsrsti ॐ as emanation.) Sometimes the universe is called ॐThis ॐ simply, covering all which appears. ॐHe knew: ' I am verily this emanation' ॐ. It is that knowledge which gives all life, all possibility of existence to the emanation, for there is no source of life save the Self, and only as He makes Himself identical with His emanation is it possible for a Universe to exist. As He affirms, there the Universe is; as He denies, the Universe vanishes into Him. This changing process, this thinking, ॐLet me be many ॐ, and then ॐLet the many cease ॐ, this is the continually recurring birth and death of Universes, and it is this triplicity, the Self, the Not-Self, and the Relation between them, which is summed up in the triple syllable, Aum.

The appearance of a Universe and its disappearance, the succession in space and time, is that by which alone the eternal simultaneity of the Be-ness of the One can be expressed. The words I quoted from the *Chhandogyopanisat* are repeated in the *Taittiriopanisat*: ॐHe wished: ' May I be many, may I be born'. ॐ [ *Taittiriya* II vi ] He, the Supreme Ishvara, by the expression of His will became the many; He brought about first the duality between Himself and Maya – He ॐwished a second ..... He divided” [ *Brhadar* I iv 3 ] – and continuing that same thought of multiplicity, He limited and limited and limited Himself, until the infinite multiplicity of the Universe was made visible. The limitations are imposed by His will. He, the One, wills to be many, and the many depend on the forthcoming of that will to multiply. This is the Supreme Ishvara, the Pratyagatma, the ॐIshvara of all Ishvaras ॐ, [ *Sanatkumara amhita* xxx 30] the Universal Self.

What is Maya ? ॐKnow Maya verily as Prakrti ॐ says the *Shvetashvataropanisat*, ॐthe Owner of Maya as Maheshvara ॐ, [*Loc cit* iv 10] the great Ishvara, the Supreme, Brahman Himself, made manifest by qualities. Hence we have in Maya. the essence of separateness, due to His will to be many, and His consequent limitations of Himself by His thought of multiplicity. That is the origin of all the beings who come forth from the One Being. Sometimes Maya is called Prakrti, Matter, sometimes Mula-Prakrti, the Root of Matter, sometimes Pradhana, the primary germ of the Sankhya philosophy, sometimes Akasha, ether. ॐThe Akasha is the body of Brahman ॐ, it is written in the *Taittiriopanisat*. [*Loc cit* I vi] How many are His names! He is the Root of all names, and yet has none, for all these I call names are only descriptions; they do not define, they simply point to the One Being, who is the Universal Self. One Upanishat speaks of Him as: ॐThe great imperishable One ॐ, [ *Mundaka* V i 2 ] another speaks of as Him as ॐDevatma ॐ, the divine Self; [ *Shretashvatara* i 3] another as the ॐAham ॐ, the ॐI ॐ, [ *Brhadar* VI v 4] perchance the deepest, truest, name of all, because the ॐI ॐ that is ourselves is His I-ness; the ॐI ॐ in you and in me is only the spark of His nature that lives within us. There is no other Aham, ॐI ॐ. He is sometimes called the Purusha, the Man, the One Man. And it is written that he is the Purusha beyond the unmanifested Monad, ॐthe last limit, and the highest goal ॐ. [ *Katha* iii II] Beyond Him there is only that Nothingness which is Fulness, that Non- Being which contains Being, that Non-Existence which is the Root of Existence, and beyond all grasp, [For the full exposition of this teaching see Bhagavan Das *Science of Peace (passim)* especially Chap vii I know of no work in which the final doctrine continually hinted at in the ancient writers, is so luminously expounded. There we have the Aum as: A=Aham; U=Etat; M=na: thus the final logion is Aham-etat-na.]



The last limit, the highest goal, and yet although so wondrous and so mighty, He is hidden in all creatures, [Shvetashvatara iii 7] Not so far away after all; nay, He is not far from any one of us, For though He be all that is – and in a moment we shall see how emphatically the Upanishat declares that where He is manifest everything is manifest after Him – and though without Him there is naught, He is hidden in your heart and in mine. And so an English poet, by some strange intuition catching a glimpse of the deep Reality hidden within himself, calls upon his own Spirit to speak to Him, because he is Himself:

Closer is He than breathing; nearer than hands and feet.

So near is He, the innermost Self of each of us.

Is there any teaching so glorious, so inspiring, as this ? anything on which, in moments of uttermost loneliness, the human heart can rest, unflinching, as the fact that He who holds the Universe within Himself lives hidden in the heart of all? What matter all mistakes, what matter all blunders, what matter all errors ? they are mortal, perishable, transitory, and the Self is in our heart, we are the Self. It is the true Gospel; the story of salvation on which alone all hearts may rest; everything else may fail us, but the Self, which is our Self, can never fail.

And for fear we should think the news too good to be true, for fear we should think that this great thing cannot be, the Upanishats repeat it variously, in recurrent details. Let me give you some of the shlokas that tell us how absolutely true is this splendid truth. By Him, than whom nothing is greater, than whom nothing is subtler nor older, who stands unshaken in the heavens like a tree, the One, the Spirit, all this is pervaded. [Shvetashvatara iii 9] If we turn to the discourse of Yama to Nachiketas, we find him explaining the many forms of the Self: It is the Self that, as Sun, dwells in the heaven, as wind in the atmosphere, as fire in the earth; He dwells in man, in ether, in water, is born in earth, in sacrifice, in the mountains; It is truth, the great One. [Katha v 2] The one Self...is the inner Self of all beings. [Ibid 9] He the One, the Lord, who makes one nature manifold, is the inner Self of all beings. [Ibid 12] And so again the Mandukya represents the same wondrous story: From this are born breath, mind, all the senses, ether, air, light, water, earth, the support of all. From Him the fire whose fuel is the Sun, from Him the Moon, from Him Gods, men, quadrupeds, birds, the vital airs, the seven senses, the seven fires, the seven channels in which the vital airs move, that sleep in the cavity of the heart, from, Him all seas and mountains, all rivers and herbs. [Summarised from Mundaka II 1. 2 – 9] Thou woman, Thou art man, Thou art virgin youth, and maiden. Thou the outworn, tottering with his staff. Thou art born, thy Face the Universe. [Compare Al Quran: “All things shall perish save His Face” ] Thou the blue, and the red-eyed green winged creatures, the thunderwomb, the seasons and the oceans. [Shvetashvatara iv 3 4] And then, after giving all this description of the reality of the identity of the universal and the particular Selves, it is declared that the Supreme Self always dwelleth in the hearts of beings. [Ibid 17] Verily this mighty unborn Self is He who is intelligence in the living; the same who is ether within the heart, wherein He sleeps” [Bhadar IV iv 22]

So we need not fear to claim our birthright; we need not fear to declare: I am He, and there is none other. If we live, we are part of Him. To say we are not He is to declare ourselves mortal, perishable, and where religion has lost this truth, there and there only can arise the question: Has man a soul? When we know ourselves the Self, there is no question of immortality; for He is unborn, undying, ancient, perpetual, eternal. [Bhagavadgītā ii 20] He exists not depending on any body; He is above and beyond all, the source of everything that is.

But how may we know it ? Here comes in once more the moral of every Upanishat. You can only know it by realising your Self. As I told you . yesterday, Moksha is not attained, it is yours. But there are obstacles which Maya has built up, which Matter, which is Maya, has made. Your body blinds you. Not transparent as the glass of the lamp, through which shines the light within, but befouled by many a lower thing, the Not-Self, which repudiates the Self. But that is all upside down. The Self may affirm and may repudiate Matter. But what is Matter, that it should venture to affirm or to repudiate the Self? Its existence is only drawn from the Self; on that alone it rests. .And it is this which deludes us, this which blinds us, this which makes us powerless. And, therefore, the purification of the vehicles is demanded ere a man may see the majesty of the Self.

That is the way. It is not the Reality, but the way thereto, and to shew [show] the way is the work of all religions. Religions, which are born of the longing of the Self to know itself, give the many means, the many ways, by which the vehicles shall be made to cease to obstruct the manifestation of the Self. The Self changes not. It is ever there, within us, as the Sun in the heaven. It shines ever. But clouds may veil the Sun from the eyes that dwell below the clouds; clouds may hide it, though their higher sides are brilliant with the shining of the Sun. And the work of all religions, the work of every one of us, of you and of me, is so to purify the vehicles, so to melt away the clouds, that the shining of the Sun-Self may shine forth in our hearts. It is not He who changes, but the lower self that purifies itself. The separateness is Maya. The manyness is Maya. But we can only get rid of that by a slow process of purification, by realising that Matter must not master Self, but that Self must master Matter. Is He not called the owner of Maya ? But the Self in you and me is owned by Maya, and is not its owner. There lies the difficulty. Therefore it is written that the bonds of the heart must be broken. [*Mundaka* II ii 8] Therefore it is written that a man must cease from evil ways. [*Katha* ii 24] Therefore it is written that we must follow righteousness, and knowledge, and devotion. [*Mundaka* III i 5]

Because, by all these ways, man makes himself master of Maya, and when he masters Maya he will know himself as Self. That is the way. And so it is written: ८ ऋ८ They who know Him as life of the life, as eye of the eye, as ear of the ear, they know Brahman, the Ancient, the First ८ ऋ८. [*Brhadar* IV iv 18] ८ ऋ८ When he sees the Self as God, the Ruler of past and future, then He wills not to conceal Himself from him. ८ ऋ८ [*Ibid* 15] He only wills to be hidden until we have so mastered Maya that He may be seen by looking within ourselves. On this is built all yoga; on this is built all righteousness; on this is built all noble living. But of all the deceptions with which Maya the mighty misleads the embodied Self, of all the obstacles and difficulties that Maya puts in the way of Self-realisation, is that worst of all hypocrisies, of all delusions, which makes a man declare with lips impure, with life unpurified, being the slave, the tool, of Maya, identifying himself with Maya: ८ ऋ८ I, mayavic shell, am Brahman ८ ऋ८. For life not lips must speak the words, and lips are worthless if life declares the contrary.

Now let us go on further to a point that puzzles very many. Hitherto I have spoken of Ishvara, the Supreme. But the word Ishvara is used of other Beings than the Saguna Brahman, and much difficulty has arisen sometimes on this question between unlearned Theosophists and unlearned Hindus. The Theosophists have learned to use the word Ishvara of many Rulers, the Logoi, and sometimes an unlearned Hindu does not know that Ishvara has also this meaning in many Shastras. The word Ishvara only means Lord, Ruler, and the Lord of any Universe, of any system, is also called Ishvara, as every well-read Hindu knows. It is a difficulty which may well arise out of the Upanishats, unless they are very carefully read. I remarked yesterday that they deal with universals rather than with particulars. Fundamental abstract ideas are treated, rather than concrete manifestations, and only here and there is there an indication that there are concrete facts that also we must grasp, concrete facts in the Universe, which we must strive to understand. One of these hints is given in the shlokas to which I now ask your attention. We

are told in the *Kathopanishat*: ष ढ ढ The eldest-born from the tapas ष ढ ढ of Ishvara is Hiranyagarbha, called also in other passages Prajapayi, or Brahma. [Compare *Katha* iv 6 and *Mundaka* I i 9 and *Prashna* ii 7] ष ढ ढ The eldest-born from the tapas. ष ढ ढ That is the link we need. All Logoi of universes are born from the ष ढ ढ tapas ष ढ ढ of the Supreme Ishvara, who is Brahman, and are the varied expressions of His thought. These are the Lords of Universes, the Progenitors, as the word Prajapati implies. ष ढ ढ Countless are grandfathers (Brahmas); Haris also are countless; the Supreme Ishvara is one. ष ढ ढ [ *Linga Purana* iv 54]

The principle is that from the Supreme Lord, from the One Self, come forth the many, and among the many, the first-born are the Rulers of the worlds, the Creators of the worlds – Hiranyagarbha, the Golden Womb, is the collective name. Brahma is the Egg-born, the Lotus-born. Theosophists use the name Logoi, a name which we apply to many Rulers, whose kingdoms vary in size, though the idea is ever the same – the Ruler of a defined area. Ishvara, the Ruler of a system, must be distinguished from Ishvara, the One, the Saguna Brahman. This secondary Ishvara is the Ruler of one Universe, where there are many Universes, the Ruler of a Solar System, among countless systems; or again, the Ruler of a Planetary Chain, within a Solar System, is called a Planetary Logos. For Logos means Word, and they all exist by the word of the Supreme. These are They who are objects of worship everywhere to those who cannot rise to the conception of the one Supreme Ishvara, and They are all born of His tapas, His austerity, His thought, His sacrifice. From sacrifice everything proceeds, we are told. ष ढ ढ The dawn (of creation) is the head of the sacrificial Horse ष ढ ढ, [ *Brhadar* I i I] where the Horse is the Universe; all is rooted in sacrifice. He has willed to become many; that is the primeval sacrifice – the limitation of Himself, His division of Himself, into Ishvara and Maya, that He may be born as the Lord and Source of all separated lives. This is the point where difficulty has arisen. Many Ishvaras ? Yes, as many as there are Universes; but one supreme Ishvara, who is Brahman Himself. And when you realise that, you understand what H. P. B. taught, that an Ishvara is the result of an evolution within a Universe. The Supreme knows not evolution; He is beyond all Maya. But all the other Ishvaras, the Logoi, They grow, They evolve. They, in Their turn, perform tapas; They, in Their turn, perform sacrifice and build worlds. Moreover, They reach the high office of an Ishvara by long struggle, by countless sacrifices; by these sacrifices the rank of an Ishvara is obtained. For the concrete facts we must turn to works of less authority than the Upanishats, and add to the shlokas from them details from other writings. In the *Vayu Samhita* we read: ष ढ ढ Let us know Him, the supreme Ishvara of all Ishvaras, the supreme Deva of all Devas, the Lord of all Lords, the Ishvara of the Ishvaras of worlds ष ढ ढ. [ *Loc cit* I iv 122] This truth makes a reconciliation between the Theosophical and Hindu views, shewing [showing] Ishvara, the Supreme, as the One Brahman, manifested, not evolved, and the many Ishvaras of worlds, the fruits of evolution. In the *Devi Bhagavata* it is written: ष ढ ढ Even if the number of grains of sand could be counted, the universes never. In the same way, to the number of Brahmas, and Vishnus, and Shivas, there is no limit ष ढ ढ. [ *Loc cit* II ix 7]

Speaking of the Maha-Virat, it is said: ष ढ ढ In every pore of the hairs of His body are countless Universes ष ढ ढ. [ *Ibid* 6] This is the Selflimitation of the one Self, the sacrifice, the meditation, the austerity, by which manyness becomes. Thus the Hiranyagarbhas are born, and Brahmas, the Creators. So also in each Brahmanda, sacrifice leads to Ishvarahood: ष ढ ढ One hundred manvantaras did Brahma make japam of Shakti. One hundred manvantaras did Vishnu make tapas, to become the Preserver ष ढ ढ. [ *Ibid* VIII ix 106. For many other passages, see the Appendix. I am indebted for all these pauranic, and most usefully explanatory passages, to my friend, Prof Bireshvar Banerji, of the Central Hindu College, Benares, a well-read pauranic scholar. It is most interesting to see how completely they corroborate the theosophic teaching, independently obtained.] So the Theosophist is right when he says that the Ishvaras of worlds

are the result of evolution, and the Hindu is right when he says that the Supreme Ishvara is not subject to evolution, He who is the Saguna Brahman, the one Life, the Self, of all. Thus the complete truth makes reconciliation where a partial view makes division; and we begin to understand that it is better that all should speak out the truth they see, however conflicting with other truths it may seem; when the whole truth is seen, all the parts blend into it and make one splendid whole. Hence we should never silence the heretic; we should never silence the minority; for they may have caught a glimpse of something that we do not possess. Rather let us encourage all to speak, that out of the manyness of vision a perfect reconciliation of all partial truths may be found; for, once more, वृष्य Truth alone conquers, not falsehood वृष्य. 'Let us speak out our truths, but not engage in the denunciation of the truths of others. In Hinduism there has been in the past absolute liberty of thought and speech, and it should not be false to this noble heritage. Where we are wrong, time will correct us; where we are mistaken, truth will gradually burn up our errors. But if one silences another, then one letter of the complete truth may slip out of sight, and be lost from the life of the world, a letter which should have had its place in the whole.

When we go back to the Law of Sacrifice, we realise that it is true as the *Mundakopanishat* says: वृष्य Spirit verily is this Universe, action tapas वृष्य. [*Loc cit* II i 10] Such is the beautiful thought that comes out of the study of the Supreme Ishvara and the many Ishvaras and Their work. Only by the sacrifice may life be given. Only by tapas, austerity, may life be realised. This is the law of our life, this is the law by which alone we live. Refuse to sacrifice, cling to matter, be Maya's slave, let Maya own you, and you remain isolated, powerless, helpless. You can help none other; you cannot help yourself. Then, Brothers, love, and lead the life of sacrifice; throw everything away – you cannot throw away the Self; all you can throw away is the Not-Self, and that is valuable only for the sake of sacrifice. Do not fear to throw away even life, for the Self within you never ceases to live. Give everything you have everything you know, everything you think of as वृष्य mine वृष्य, and in the denial of all that is not Self, the one Aham shall arise within you, and you shall know that वृष्य I am He वृष्य.

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## THIRD LECTURE. JĪVĀTMĀS

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Brothers: OUR special subject for today is Jivatmas. It is naturally the next in our study. For we have tried, however feebly, to grasp that all-important truth that Brahman is All. Then we have sought to pierce that which is dark by intolerable excess of light, and to see, as it were, the coming forth of the One, the first Being, the Universal Self, the Saguna Brahman, Ishvara Himself. We have tried to follow, step by step, the manifestation which was manifested after Him, to use the words of the Upanishat: When He manifesteth, all is manifested after Him; [*Shvetashvatara* vi 14, and *Mundaka* II ii 10] and we saw that among those manifestations were the great Ishvaras of lokas, world-systems, universes; and we have now come to the point in our study where, having seen all these early stages, we next naturally ask: “And what about the inhabitants of all these worlds? How does the central life divide itself among the many? What is meant by the word Jivatma, the living Self, the Self which is life? and what is the distinction between the Jivatma and Ishvara Himself? Such are the problems that now we are to seek to solve, and when we have apprehended the nature of the Jivatma, already alluded to by the declaration that Ishvara becomes many by His own will, naturally after that we shall pause for a moment on the nature of man as man. We must try to understand our own nature, and, understanding that, we may see the path, if so I may phrase it which leads to the realisation of the Self. These are the rough details of what we shall try to do today, and tomorrow we shall take up that path with rather more detail, in studying the wheel of births and deaths; we must see what birth and death can mean in connexion with that which is itself unborn and undying. What can birth and death have to do with that which in itself is eternal, sharing the eternity of God Himself? And so, if it may be, we shall go hence with some fresh inspiration, to tread the path of the pilgrimage with some fresh light on the difficulties of understanding, with some new courage to climb over the obstacles that impede. Looking over any world-system, or world, that you live in, you see around you living creatures of every kind, and some creatures which are not regarded as living by large numbers of people. But to us there is no difference between the creatures called living and non-living save in the degree of life which is manifested; there is no fundamental difference, no separation. I might take up in my hand a grain of sand. To me there must be a Jivatma hidden in a dense veil of matter. We may see appear amongst us the loftiest Deva who rules a world; he to us also must be but the same thing, a Jivatma; only in him the veil is thinner, the matter less gross. The light, which is alike in him and in the sand-grain, shines out in the one, is obscured in the other.

Now let us see whether that statement is in any sense an exaggeration and senseless. For this, of course, we turn to the same book, or books rather, which are guiding our study right through, and realising that everything has a Jivatma at its heart, let us for a moment pause on certain great principles. For, if you grasp these clearly, their application is only a matter of thought, of trouble, of using them to explain particular cases, and that use and explanation you must not expect to find in the Upanishats. They give us the principles which may be applied to all, but not their applications in detail.

Now one of those principles is that all manifestation is by trinities, by triads, by threes. This is natural, is it not? Because at the very beginning of all primary manifestation shows out the triple nature of the manifesting, and He is spoken out in the three-lettered Aum. So, naturally, what comes from that will also be triple in its nature, inasmuch as it must be reflexion after reflexion, and the object which is reflected being triple, the image or reflection also must be triple in turn.

That is one of the principles, and we find that it is given out very clearly in one of the Upanishats; in the *Chhandogypanishat* we read that in the earliest stages three great Elements – we may call them Devatas – were produced, and they were heat or fire, water, and food – food standing, of course, for earth, which is the giver of all food. Those three Beings were brought forth by Ishvara for all worlds, and He willed: ॐ Having entered these three Devatas as Jivatma, I shall become manifest in name and form ॐ. [*Loc cit* VI iii 2] These are the words which for a moment demand our special attention: ॐ I shall become manifest in name and form ॐ. Having thus entered these, each of them became a trinity in turn. The fire became a trinity by His entry; the water became a trinity by His entry; the food became a trinity by His entry. Thus the three became nine, and so on and on; each new trinity reproduced its nature in another three trinities, and thus the whole universe became filled with these trinities, or triads, each of which is a reflexion of the life whence it came forth; as He says: ॐ I shall become manifest as Jivatma in name and form ॐ, we get a definition of a Jivatma. A Jivatma is Ishvara with name and form. That definition is drawn from the Upanishat itself. The Jivatma is nothing less than Ishvara with name, with form – as we should say, individualised, particularised – and a Jivatma is nothing more than that. It is the widest thing in its essence, and name and form are its limitations. Name and form imply the presence of matter, for matter is, as it is said in the *Vishnu Purana*, ॐ Extension ॐ. Hence form implies matter, vehicle, upadhi, body, call it what you like. Name means that particular note which is sounded out by every aggregation, or combination of matter, that which is the ॐ real name ॐ of every living thing. You are called by many names, but those are not your true names; they change from birth to birth. In one birth you may be a William; in another you may be a Kalicharan; in one birth you may be a man, with a man's name; in another a woman, with a woman's name; for it is written of him, the Jivatma: ॐ He is not woman, he is not man, nor hermaphrodite ॐ. [*Shvetashvatara* v 10] He is above all distinctions of sex. So none of these changing names can be ॐ the name ॐ by which Ishvara becomes a Jivatma.

What is ॐ the name ॐ then ? Every aggregation of matter, of atoms, sends out by its vibrations a sound, and the sound which is the resultant of the totality of all those vibrations, according to the composition of the material nature, is ॐ the name ॐ of that object. The sound which is given but by the aggregation, with the light of the Jivatma within it, which is also sound, blending into one great note, which expresses perfectly the nature of the individual, that and that only is his true name. Such is the name of each of us, and each of us has such a name, sounding out in a very clumsy way at present, very discordant, because all kinds of non-harmonious sounds mix in, and the note is not clear. None the less it is there, and the realisation of the name is the realisation of the Self. So our Jivatmas are Ishvara with name and form.

The next step that we will take, still following our guide, is the reiteration of that statement which you heard yesterday in other words from other Upanishats, but which comes in rightly here also, to explain to us the nature of the Jivatma. ॐ This is Brahman, this Indra, this Prajapati, this all Devas and the five great elements, earth, air, ether, water, light, the egg-born, the womb-born, the gemmation-born, horses, cows, men, elephants, whatsoever has breath, the walking, the flying, the immovable ॐ. [*Aitareya* III v 3] Then we read in the *Bṛhadaranyakopanishat*: ॐ That Immortal is hidden by existence” . A strange phrase ! We say that the Immortal is shown forth by existence; but the deeper vision says that the Immortal is hidden by existence. Existence is part of the Maya. It limits that which, in itself, is illimitable.

Hence the Immortal is verily hidden from you by the very fact of your separate existence. ८ १३  
 Life is verily the Immortal; name and form existence; by these the life is concealed. ८ १४  
 [Brhadar I vi 3] That is the great truth of the Jivatma. And once again I may remind you of that  
 which I quoted yesterday, for it is our starting-point now. I recall these words from the  
*Chhandogyopanishat*: ८ १५ That same Brahman is verily that ether which is without man, and is  
 verily that ether which is within man. ८ १६ Such then is the Jivatma.

No doubt can remain as to the teaching of the Upanishats on this crucial point, and if I draw your  
 attention to it in so many ways, and with so many shlokas, it is because it is the turning point of  
 all, the pivot on which the whole conception of life must turn. If this be not realised, you remain  
 ever slaves and blind. If this be realised, then all else must follow, for it is true in us as in the  
 world: ८ १७ When the Self manifests, all is manifested after Him ८ १८. No matter then if you  
 blunder, if you are still blind, if your upadhis fetter you; it matters not, if you recognise the one  
 great truth of your own Divinity; for as the sun burns up the clouds that obscure him by the  
 glory of his light, so shall the glory of the Self, shining within the heart, burn up everything  
 which obstructs, until it shines forth undimmed.

What is the difference then between Ishvara and the Jivatma, which is implied by the terms ८ १९  
 name and form ८ २०. What is it? We read again in the *Shvetashvataropanishat*: ८ २१ Knowing  
 and unknowing, both unborn, powerful powerless,.....in bonds by the condition of an enjoyer. ८  
 २२ [Loc cit i 9] Bound to objects; that is the difference, that and nothing else. Break the bonds  
 which bind his bodies, and he is free. Within the bondage of the bodies, he is ever free, for  
 freedom is the essence of his nature and he, in truth, is not bound by all those bonds around  
 him; it is the vehicles that are bound and not the Self. The Jivatma is ever free.

A question arises here: What is all this for? Why should this Jivatma of the nature of Ishvara,  
 allknowing, all-powerful, why, by what strange mystery, does he become ignorant, powerless?  
 Why? For what end? Did we lose freedom? Why did we lose it? That we did lose it is clear, for  
 we are here, and are bound. And unless that question is answered, you will always remain more  
 or less puzzled. For at first sight, the whole proceeding seems absurd. If we were free, at any  
 time, in any state, why should we have deliberately plunged into this ocean of Maya, and lose  
 therein the freedom which is our birthright, and the knowledge which is the very nature of the  
 Self? Why did we do it? It is clear, we did it, since we are here, but why? The answer is as clear  
 as the fact; we did it because in that world of the highest Gods, that world in which knowledge is  
 perfect and power omnipotent, in that world there is but the finest matter, subtlest limitations  
 of form, so subtle that all the forms intermingle, and you cannot say which is one and which is  
 the other; to use an old Greek description of that state, the sun and the stars are all each other  
 and themselves. The knowledge, though wide, lacked in definite precision, which can only be  
 gained by limitation. That is another great principle. As you limit, you define, As you define,  
 more and more clear become the outlines, and while it is true that the Jivatma in these lofty  
 regions is allknowing and omnipotent, in the denser matter which Ishvara makes for his  
 universe, it becomes blind and helpless, the slave of Maya; and he comes into manifestation, that  
 he may do what Ishvara had done before him, may become the master of Maya and not its slave;  
 so that nowhere, in that all which is Brahman, there may be anything which can limit, anything  
 which can blind. By our own will we come, that we may enjoy the exercise of our powers. But  
 when we try to exercise our powers in this great ocean of denser matter, we find we cannot do

it. Matter is too blinding, too opaque, too stiff; we cannot manage it; we cannot control it; and, by our own will, in order that we may become its master, we become for a time its slave; knowing it, willing it, and willing not to rest in that high region, where only we were free, but willing to be free everywhere, and not only in that loftiest region, willing to live and act, and know, in every possible condition of matter, and not only in that subtlest form which is the region of our birth-place and our real home. It is part of the very nature of life, to will to live, to exercise its powers.

How can we help it? We are part of Ishvara, and we share the outgoing energy of His will. There is a joy in becoming many; there is a joy in the scattering abroad of power, of life; there is a joy in creation, in pouring our life into the forms we create; and we, as parts of Him, will as He wills, and with him enter into the ocean of matter that we may win our freedom there, and be as He is, ever free.

We are parts of Him, limited by name and form, and the part has not at first the possibilities, or rather the actualities, of the whole. The possibilities, yes, because we are parts. The expression of them, no, also because we are parts. In order that we who are parts may become the whole, we enter into a temporary limitation, that therein we may conquer, that therein we may be free. Hence this bondage. In your limited condition, you may wonder why you came hither. But none compelled you to come into this universe. You came of your own will, with Ishvara who willed to manifest. And because He willed to manifest you willed it also. For you are part of Him. As a part, you must win your freedom, until in the grossest world of matter you shall be as omnipotent, as wise, as you ever *are* in those supernal regions of your birth, where you know your own divinity and your non-separation from Ishvara.

In the *Aitareyopanishat* a very short but valuable Upanishat, there is a most interesting description of the way in which the stages of this manifestation of the Jivatmas took place. ८३ In the origins this was verily the one Self and nought else living; He willed: Let me emanate the worlds. ८४ [Aitareya I i I, *et seq*] He then proceeded to emanate them. First came forth the Elements, then the Devas. Let us pause on that for a moment. What are these Devas? The Devas of the Elements; those mighty beings from past universes, who have as their bodies what in the old scriptures are called Elements. As you have your physical body, so have they their bodies of matter, and the body of the Deva is the matter of one whole plane – as we call it. A plane is formed of one kind of matter, one Element.

Do not muddle these Elements up with chemical elements, or you will never find your way. An Element, in the old sense of the term, means matter which has a special form of atom; of these there are seven, five of which are manifested. These five kinds of atoms are the five Elements, and of each of these Elements, or elemental atoms, there are endless combinations, all the combinations of one kind of elemental atom making a plane. Thus one Element, say Fire, is in all the matter which is built up of the fire-atoms, everything, however complex, however many atoms may enter into any combination. These fire-atoms make the body of the Deva of the Fire Element, Agni; into that body made of fire-atoms he entered, and it then became his vehicle of manifestation. That is the next thought you must hold on to. Every Element is the body of a Deva and all the matter composed of that Element belongs to that body of the Deva. He is in it all; as



truly as your Jivatma lives in your body, and moves it, and is conscious in it, so in all combinations of fire-atoms, Agni lives, moves, and is conscious. That is what is meant by the Deva of an Element. Agni is in everything in the three worlds into which fire enters.

In the stages of the building of a universe, then, at first there were the Elements, and then began the building of forms, and Ishvara built by His thought certain forms, and offered them to the Devas to live in, and the Devas rejected them. They said: ८ ढ्ढ We will not live in these ८ ढ्ढ. Then He made other forms, and they rejected them also, and said: ८ ढ्ढ We will not live in those ८ ढ्ढ. They were willing to give up their substance to them, but they would not identify themselves with them. Then He made the Purusha, the archetypal man, and the Devas cried out: ८ ढ्ढ Well done ! into him we will enter, and in him we will dwell ८ ढ्ढ. Therefore man is the highest of all things. In the later building of worlds, all animals are but his cast-off parts. That which he has thrown out is used for the building of the animal kingdom. And sometimes, if you complain of the kind of animals round you, if you look upon them as obstacles, as hindrances, as tormentors, remember that they exist only because men thought wrongly and acted wrongly. These animals that are around you are the results of your own past, tormenting you in your higher present. These Jivatmas live in the bodies that you have made for them, your cast-off clothes; and remember that only by rising higher can you purify and lead the animal kingdom with you, for it is your own creation, as you are the creation of those who are higher than yourselves.

The Devas enter into man, they give him of their substance, and with that substance of theirs his senses were built. Fire became speech in his mouth, wind breath in his nostrils, and so on; they became the senses which have their organs in the body and the powers and capacities of the Devas reside in these. Then the Jivatma, for whom this temple was being built – for is not the human body the Brahmapura, the Vishnupura, the divine town of Brahman, [See *Mundaka* II ii 7: *Chhandogya* VII i, I; *Katha* v I; *Shvetashvatara* iii 18 etc] the habitation of God – the Jivatma said: ८ ढ्ढ Let me enter in ८ ढ्ढ, and He entered at the head, where the hairs of the head separate, and thus became the dweller in the body, the embodied Self. ८ ढ्ढ This body is a dwelling of the immortal un-embodied Self. ८ ढ्ढ [Chhandogya VIII xii I] He entered in, and took up therein three dwelling-places. The Upanishat does not mention what these are. It only says: ८ ढ्ढ A dwelling-place, a dwelling-place, a dwelling-place ८ ढ्ढ. What are they ? If this Upanishat will not tell us, another will. We only know from this that there are three dwellingplaces, but in the *Mandukyopanishat* it is shown what they are. We have the waking consciousness, and the brain in which it works is one dwelling-place. That brain is sometimes symbolised by the right eye, as the symbol of the brain, which knows through the senses. The second dwelling-place is that of the superwaking consciousness, of the Ego, or Taijasa; and that is the mental body, or the antahkarana, the inner mind. The third dwelling-place is that of the Monad himself, the Jivatma when he is like Ishvara, the Jnana Deha in its subtlest form, and the highest of all; it is sometimes symbolised by the ether in the cavity of the heart, the lotus-like chamber, where is the antarakasha, the inner ether, wherein dwells the Self. [Chhandogya VIII i I] Those are the three dwelling-places of the consciousness thus appearing as triple; the Pranatma as I have called it, Vaishvanara; the next, Taijasa, the brilliant, the radiant, the allpervading intelligence, the Aham, the ८ ढ्ढ I ८ ढ्ढ; lastly that highest state where knowledge, Prajna, is perfect and the man has become Prajna, the Lord of all knowledge. Those are the three states; those the dwelling-places of Ishvara, as Jivatma, limited by name and form.

Let us pause on this triple nature of man, for in it comes out another important principle, the principle of reflexion. Each manifestation throws a shadow, an imperfect reproduction of itself, and so the pair, shadow and sun-light, are continually spoken of. Yama uses that phrase when teaching Nachiketah about the lower and the supreme Self; ँ ःBrahma-knowers ँ ः, says he, ँ ःcall them shadow and sun-light ँ ः. [ *Katha* III I ] I want you to grasp the significance of this principle of reflexion, because then you will have a clue which will guide you through many labyrinths. The words shadow and sunlight may be used of different things, of various pairs. But if you understand the principle, you will easily distinguish the particularity of the use. Whenever there is a pair, a higher manifesting in a lower, there the principle of reflexion comes in, and you have sun-light and shadow. The simile is a graphic one. Suppose I have a brilliant light here, and suppose that all around me there is only the atmosphere through which the light can flow, there is no shadow. But suppose I bring some object of dense matter, and put that in the rays of light, a shadow is thrown, and the shadow has the outline of the object that throws it, but not a complete reproduction of its parts; where there is light and an interposition of denser matter, a shadow is thrown. The Monad is the highest separated form, and is so little separated, by such a subtle film of matter, that you can only say that there is a veil of separation; but that veil is permeable, and no one Monad has one place, but all have every place. The Monad is the light; in denser matter is its shadow, the triple Jivatma, the Atma-Buddhi-Manas, sometimes called the triple Atma, the individual spiritual man, the true Aham, when unified. The first pair of sun-light and shadow is the Monad in the worlds of the Gods, and the triple Atma in the mortal world, the world of man. But a further descent has to be made, a grosser manifestation, so another pair arises; the triple Atma becomes the sun-light, and the living soul, the vital breath in the human body, the Pranatma, that becomes the shadow. So that in you and me, the shadow is this Prana, the sun-light is the triple Atma. When we have realised the triple Atma, and know it as our Self, then even that becomes the shadow, and the sun-light is the true Jivatma, the Monad, the amsha, or part of Ishvara Himself. When we have realised that as our Self and have merged in that, then that becomes the shadow and Ishvara the only light. Hence it is written: ँ ःThis life is born of the Self. As a shadow by man, so in that this is produced:[*Prashna* iii 3] How perfect is the simile. Only understand how to apply it, and all becomes orderly. The same truth is laid down in the *Taittiriyaopanishat*, .that each lower is the body of the higher; Ishvara is the body of the Nirguna Brahman; the lower Ishvaras are His body in turn; the human Jivatmas are the body of those secondary Ishvaras, and so down and down to the grossest form of matter, the physical body, which is the body of Prana, the life-breath. [*Loc cit* II iii – vi] And thus there is a ladder, in which not one rung is wanting, and you may climb to the higher, for every rung is there, and there is no difference except in the upadhis that clothe the one consciousness.

From this we may get a definition of man. He is the form of being in whom the Self and the Not-Self are balanced. That is the only occult definition of ँ ःman ँ ः, not any specific form, nor organs, nor arrangement of head and arms and legs, and so on. Man is the being, in any shape, in whom the powers of the Jivatma are struggling for supremacy, in whom Matter and Spirit are striving against each other for the mastery. Man is the battlefield of the universe, in which Ishvara and Maya are contending for lordship; below him, Maya is Lord and Ishvara is hidden; above him, Ishvara is Lord, and Maya is conquered; in him the two are battling for supremacy, so that, as I say, the battlefield, the Kurukshetra of the universe, is man. Every Jivatma in the universe must strive on this battlefield, must be, or must have been, man – as H. P. Blavatsky says.

There is another expression that is very useful and illuminative; we read of what is called the Jnanashakti, the knowledge-power. This is the Jivatma, whose nature is consciousness, or knowledge; its shadow is the Pranatma, the personal self, the Kriyashakti, the power of action. These are a pair, our sunlight and shadow, the higher and lower Aham, or ॐ I ॐ. ॐ Two birds, united, one-named, dwell on the single tree: of the twain, one enjoys the delicious fig-tree, the other witnesses. ॐ [Mundaka III i I] What are the birds? Any pair, of which the lower is the shadow of the higher. What is the tree? Any upadhi, vehicle, form, in which a higher dwells. The two birds in us are the Atma. and the Pranatma, and the bodies are the tree; the Pranatma enjoys, the triple Atma witnesses. In the Rshis the two birds are the Monad, the true Jivatma, and the triple Atma; the triple Atma enjoys, the Monad witnesses. In every case the higher is the witness, and the lower is the instrument, or tool, of the witness through which he acts in the world. Yet higher, the two birds are the Nirguna and the Saguna Brahman, the eternal Witness, the Enjoyer in space and time.

Remain the questions: what is Prana, and what is its relation to the Elements, to the Devas, and to the Jivatma itself?

Indra said; ॐ am Prana.....life is Prana, Prana is life ॐ. [Kaushitakibrahmana III 2] Indra is the King of the Gods, the highest of them, and he stands as the symbol of the Devas working in the universe, and also of the Jivatma and Ishvara. [See Aitareya I iii 4, where it is stated that Idandra (*idampashyati*, he who sees this, who sees the Not-self) is the name of the supreme Ishvara, and that this is changed to Indra] ॐ am Prana ॐ, and why Prana? Because as Ishvara, He is the giver of life to all things, and the life, the breath on the physical plane, is hence called Prana. Therefore, in Yoga, Prana is often used to include all the life-energies of the universe, and pranayama is not really the control of the physical breath, but of all the life-energies, the subdual of them all to the Self.

But let us follow this further. In its relation to the Elements and the Devas it is said that Prana is five-fold, dividing itself, and five Pranas are spoken of. True; on the physical plane it is fivefold, dividing itself into five branches, but it is still one life; it is like a single source, or spring, sending out its water into different channels, and each channel is different, though the water is the same. Prana is called by many names, as you give different names to the waters that flow along different channels; you may call the rivers Ganga, or Brahmaputra, or Indus, but they are all water from the Himalayas; so Prana, five-fold dividing itself, is called by different names, when seen as divided, although called by one name when understood: ॐ When breathing it is called life; when speaking, speech; when seeing, sight; when hearing, ear; when minding, mind ॐ. [Commentary on Brhadar I iv 6] For this reason in the Upanishats the senses are often called Devas, and thus ever remind us that it is life that produces forms, and not forms life. One thing is called by many names. It is one Prana, in all of them. We are told that the senses are active only when Prana is there. There is a very fine passage in the *Chhandogyopanishat*, which I will summarise very rapidly, in order to show the relation of Prana to the senses. The organs quarrelled for supremacy, and each cried out: ॐ I am the chief ॐ; and they went to Prajapati, and inquired: ॐ Who is the chief? ॐ and his answer was; ॐ The one who, if he disappears, makes the body helpless, he is the chief ॐ. Then speech departed, and the body lived as the dumb live; then vision went, and it lived as the blind; and hearing, and it lived as the deaf; and mind, and it lived as the babe or the idiot; then Prana arose to go; and ॐ as a

splendid steed, if struck, plucks out the pegs to which its legs are fastened, so did Prana dislodge all the organs of sense ष ढक, and they cried out: ष ढढO Lord, thou art the greatest; we pray thee, depart not, abide in thy place ष ढक. And, one by one, they came to Prana, and acknowledged that their specific properties were due to Prana only. [Loc cit V i 6-15] For they are all Prana, and without Prana, none of them can live.

What is the relation of Prana to the Jivatma ? We shall see that it is verily himself. The Prana which is in you is truly your Jivatma, is your true Self. Therefore I called the lower manifestation the Pranatma. Each sense has been taken by Prana from one faculty of intelligence, one faculty of the triple Atma, a faculty which belongs to Jnanashakti, and Prana, taking that faculty, turns it into a power, transforms it to Kriyashakti. The object of the sense is placed outside as a rudimentary element, and induces activity in that special sense, and thus with all the possibilities of the triple Atma. Then it is said that Prajna, knowledge, having mounted on each sense, lives and works in the world, and knows all objects. [Summarised from *Kaushitikibrahmana* iii 5-7] All the knowledge resides in the triple Atma, who is truly the Jnanashakti.

Those faculties having been taken by Prana, and each of them turned into a shakti, a power, it is written that the true Prana is identical with Atma; [*Kaushitikibrahmana* iv 19] for Prana is Atma under the name of Prajna; ष ढढPrana is Prajna, and Prajna is Prana ष ढक. [*Ibid.* iii 3] There is no difference, save in the form of manifestation. When Prana has done this, then the Jivatma. is said to dwell in the body: ष ढढO Maghavan, mortal verily is this body, pervaded by death; of that immortal and bodiless Self it is the dwelling-place ष ढक. [*Chhandogya* VI xii I] Through Prana, the triple Atma dwells within us. Through Prana, the triple Atma works within us. And so it is written that all the bodily sense organs were really made by the will of the Self to experience the contacts of the varied forms of matter: the Self desired to see, to hear, to speak, to smell, to think, and hence came the organs. [*Ibid* 4] That is the order of evolution; it is not the Self which is the production of the body, but, the body which is the building produced by the powers inherent in the Self; every manifestation in this mortal world, this world which is pervaded by death, is due to the will of the Self; that is the truth. There is nothing in you which is not from the triple Atma; no power, no thought, no organ of sense, but comes out by his will, because he wills to manifest, and wills to enjoy. And so it is written, as said above: ष ढढFrom the Self is born this life ष ढक.

The inevitable result of this study is a matter for daily life, for the training of the student. Clearly it is not in these organs, Self-created, that the Self may find rest. These organs can never satisfy, when we realise that we made them only to serve our passing purpose. It is the Self who ष ढढ sees, unseen; hears, unheard; minds, unminded; knows, unknown. There is none that sees, but he. There is none that hears, but he. There is none that minds, but he. There is none that knows, but he. He is thy Self, the inner Ruler, immortal ष ढक. [*Brhadar* III vii 23] Hence the advice: ष ढढ Let not a man wish to know speech, let him know the speaker. Let not a man wish to know smell, let him know the smeller. Let not a man wish to know form, let him know the seer. Let not a man wish to know sound, let him know the hearer...Let not a man wish to know the mind, let him know the thinker. ष ढक The Self ष ढढis the Owner of the world, the King of the world, the Lord of the world; this is my Self. Thus let a man know. ष ढक [*Kaushitikibrahmana* iii 8] For, is

not this reasonable? What is the good of knowing the objects only, if that which knows them is within us? They become secondary, trivial, foolish. It is the Self who possesses all the powers, whom we should truly desire to know.

On this understanding of the nature of the Jivatma, the nature of man, is built up all Yoga, and the steps to Self-knowledge, as said before, is the real Pranayama. All its stages are to be followed, one by one, understood one by one, and gradually mastered, until we reach the Self within us. It is that Self who is to be known, who is to be understood, who is to be realised; and all forms must die, for they are perishable, till only the immortal, the imperishable Self remains. That is the Pranayama of which true Yogis speak. ८ ऋ॥ He who rightly recognises this Self as God, Lord of the past and the future, he seeks not to hide himself. ८ ऋ॥ [Brhadar IV iv 15] Why should he hide? How should he hide? He is ८ ऋ॥ Brahman, the deathless, the fearless. ८ ऋ॥ [Chhandogya VIII vii 4] There is nothing which he can fear. He, is himself all, and when he understands that, nobody and nothing remains outside him, whom or which he can fear. Do you think you have enemies ? It is all a delusion; there is nothing but the Self, and there is nothing outside which can be the enemy of the Self-knower. Do you think that you have trials, troubles, that you suffer injustice and wrong? there is nothing outside you which can inflict a wrong on you. You are the Self; one part of you is striking at the other part, and both parts are ignorant that you are striking at yourself, striking with your own hands at your own head. By delusion Self is Self's enemy, and we know not that everywhere, in everyone, we, the Self, have hands and feet and eyes. They are all our own and there is no difference; that hand of ours that seeks to strike us is our own hand, working out our karma, and when it is worked out, we shall be free. It is striking off, this hand of ours, the fetters that clog us. Hence it is said that there are no friends, no enemies; it is one life, the Self, and that Self ८ ऋ॥ the deathless fearless Brahman ८ ऋ॥. ८ ऋ॥ Brahman the Immortal, verily, from behind, Brahman from before, Brahman from right and left, below, above, all-pervading, Brahman even this all, most excellent. ८ ऋ॥ [Mundaka II ii II]

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## FOURTH LECTURE. THE WHEEL OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS

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Brothers:

Yesterday morning, as you will remember, we studied the nature of the Jivatma; we tried to understand how he was constituted, what was his fundamental nature, and what the nature of the upadhis, or bodies, in which he lives in the gross and in the subtle worlds. Today, in order to make the subject of these lectures complete, I propose that we should try to follow the Jivatma through his human stage, remembering that behind him there is the sub-human stage through which he has ascended, remembering that beyond him there is the super-human stage, to which inevitably he will ascend. Our work today is to trace the human passage; to try to understand the nature of this Brahman-wheel of births and deaths to which the Jivatma is bound through his long human life; to see where it turns, why it turns, and how; to understand how the bond that binds the Jivatma to it may, be loosened, may be broken; to see what is the change in the Jivatma by the breaking of the bonds, by the loosening of the chains; and, lastly, to understand what are the means for the loosening, how this Jivatma, bound on the wheel, is to show out his inherent liberty, the freedom which is his, because he is Brahman. That is to be the line of our thought.

Now we notice that in the Upanishats the word Brahman-wheel is used over and over again, where it is desired to intimate to the student that there is a recurring repetition of a certain sequence of events. As a wheel turns round and round, and as every part of it in turn is uppermost, and any spot you may choose on it will return to the place where originally you observed it, so is it with births and deaths in this wheel which is called Brahman. For we read: In this infinite Brahman-wheel, the abiding-place of all beings, wanders the Hamsa, thinking the Self and the Ruler different. [Shvetashvatara i 6] Shri Shankaracharya, dealing with that word Hamsa, derives it from a sentence which, translated, means one who travels along the road.

So that sometimes you find it translated as wanderer, or pilgrim – the Pilgrim-Self. The deeper meaning is that the Self is Hamsa, the Brahman, the Aham – a declaration of the unity of the particular Brahman with the Universal Brahman. But the word pilgrim will suit us well enough, for this particular Brahman travels from his particularity to the universality of the universal Brahman, and the Self is the Hamsa who is continually travelling in the infinite Brahman-wheel, which is the universe.

It is elsewhere written with regard to this same wheel revolving, that it revolves by God, and on God; it revolves by the splendor of the Supreme, it does not move by its own nature: By the splendor of the Supreme, the Brahman-wheel revolves. [Shvetashvatara vi I] And again it is written that the Supreme is the pivot on which the universe revolves. [Ibid 6] Thus we have the idea of a continual revolution of all things, a recurring sequence, a universe revolving by the divine impulse, founded on the divine nature; and to that wheel of the universe, the pilgrim-souls are bound; bound, not in their own nature, which is freedom, but bound by the vehicles into which they have entered for the gaining of experience. And we must always remember,

when we speak of binding, that it is only the vehicles which are bound. It is as though you were chained, not by your limbs but only by your clothes; a very real bondage for all practical purposes, for you may be said to be chained, and yet, analysed, it is not you who are thus bound. So, truly, our wanderers, our pilgrims, are not bound. You cannot bind the Jivatma any more than you can bind the sun-light; but the shadow which the sun-light throws, that is bound to the wheel of births and deaths. It is by understanding that it is only the shadow which is bound, that you can gradually feel your own inherent freedom, and at last know yourself as free. Where does the wheel of births and deaths revolve ? It revolves within the vaster wheel of the universe, of which we have just spoken, and the revolutions of this wheel are confined within the three worlds. That is the next point to remember. The succession of births and of deaths is only through the three worlds familiar to us as the Triloki. The Upanishat says: ८ ऋ॥ There are verily three worlds, the world of man, the world of the Pitrs, and the world of the Devas ८ ऋ॥ [Brhadar I v 16] These are the three worlds. The world pervaded by death, that is the world of men, Bhurloka, The world which is called the intermediate world, in which, it is written, a man, a Jivatma, can see the world of men on the one side and the world of the Devas on the other side. [Ibid IV iii 9] That is the world of the Pitrs, Bhuvarloka. And then the third, the heavenly world, the world of the Gods, that is the third, Svargaloka. Now, over all these three worlds death has power. You remember how Nachiketah, when he saw Yama, and when Yama offered all the joys of earth, with everything it had to give, sons and grandsons, cattle, elephants, gold, horses, long life, kingship, and even went a step further, and bade him take the heavenly world and its joys, Nachiketah met him with the question whether in earth and heaven also he did not hold the sceptre, and flung back to him all the offered joys as tainted with mortality. [Katha ii 23-28] King Yama could not deny that although the heavenly life was longer than the earthly, it still found its goal in death, that his sceptre verily swept across the heaven as well as over the earth, that no permanence could be found in any world where he had sway, and that all his gifts were tainted by the transitory nature of their life. In these three worlds, then, the wheel of births and deaths is turning. We Theosophists speak of them as the physical plane, the astral plane, and the mental, or devachanic, plane.

On that last plane, the mental, we have to pause a moment, because of a dividing line therein, in relation to the recurrence of births and deaths. Every plane is divided into a three and a four, into seven subplanes, as you know. I have no time now to go into these and their significance, and will only say, in passing, one important thing: that as the Jivatma conquers a plane, the three and the four change places. At first the three are above and the four below, the triangle is over the quaternary. But when the plane is conquered, when the man is passing from the domination of the plane to a place whence he can rule it, the middle sub-plane leaves the lower and joins the higher, and, instead of the triangle being over the quaternary, you have a triangle below and a quaternary, the Tetractys, above, dominating it. This idea may hint to you why on this plane you have the three below – earth, liquid or water, and gas, and the four above – the ethers; not tangible, perceptible, visible. On the earth plane, the turning-point has been reached and it is the four that are above here, while the three are below; and all the future progress of science depends on learning about and understanding the nature and forces of the ethers of the physical plane; for the three lie behind us, so to speak, their work is well-nigh done.

But on the mental plane it is otherwise; the arupa sub-planes are three and the rupa are four; the wheel of births and deaths does not enter the upper three, the arupa, the formless. There is the Ego himself, in his own body, untouched by birth and untouched by death, that manasic body, which remains throughout the cycle; It does not disintegrate under the sway of death, as

do the three lower – the mental, astral, and physical. These three, and these only are subject to birth and death. Death does not mean only death on the physical plane, but death on the three successive planes; on each the body belonging to it is disintegrated after death, leaving only one particle, the permanent atom, in which the experience of the body is preserved. The wheel turns, then, in the three worlds.

Why ? and how ? Why – because each world has its own function in the unfolding of the Jivatmic powers, and the shaping of the bodies through which these powers are expressed; we remember that these bodies are the shadow of which the Jivama is the sunlight. On the lowest plane, the world of physical matter, the seed is sown; in other words, experience is gathered. Only on that plane, for the vast majority of mankind, is consciousness developed to the point where it is definite, clear, precise, where outlines are fully seen, where objects are sharply separated from other objects, where there is no blurring, no confusion of outlines, where everything is shaped, defined, clear. On that last plane of matter, where division is greatest, must this accuracy of definition be acquired by the wanderer, the pilgrim. That is why he has come here. He has come in order that, by the division of his powers, by the clothing of each of them separately in matter, by the turning of each Jnanashakti into a Kriyashakti, this clearest definition and complete accuracy may be attained. He is here for this and for the gathering of experience, to be used up for growth and unfolding in the next two worlds.

Out of this world he passes by death and enters the next world, the astral world, Bhuvanloka, of which the higher part is the world of the Pitrs, the lower the world of the Pretas, Kamaloka. What does he do there ? Carrying with him in his memory all the life which he has lived on the physical plane – for that he carries with him the memory, we shall see plainly in a moment – he begins to learn the results of what he did on the physical plane. That is the world in which the results of the lower activities show themselves, in which he gathers part of the fruitage of the seed that he has sown in the earth-life. He experiences many a bitter pain as the outcome of folly, of ignorance, of evil-doing, in the mortal world, and a great part, indeed, does Kamaloka play in his earlier tuition; many of his primary lessons are given most effectively in that bitter school. For every animal craving he has fostered during his earth-life, remains with him as a craving that cannot be satisfied in Kamaloka, a constant torture, until it is starved out by lack of gratification. Thus he learns that he must conquer the animal in him, that it may not gnaw him after the death of the body. That part of the experience garnered, he passes on into Pitrloka, a peaceful and happy dwelling-place, and thence into the third world, the Svargaloka. There he has only available his mental body as his vehicle of consciousness, with everything that it contains – his memories of the past, his thoughts, his emotions, his nobler desires, all those activities which make up our conscious mental life in the three worlds; those are his possessions in the world of the Devas. And there, looking back over the past, he begins to work for the future. He changes his experiences into faculties, which he will exercise in the next life or the physical plane. He works up his thoughts into the powers of the inner life, so that experience becomes faculties, and aspirations become powers, And when all this is over, when every ear of the harvest sown in the physical world has been reaped, when the fruits have been eaten and nothing remains which has not been assimilated by the Jivatma; then he casts away the emptied mental body, the shell, the dross, of no further service to himself, and hands the whole results on to his permanent vehicle, the true manasic body, while the now useless lower vehicle is scattered, and goes back to the reservoir of thought-stuff, of mental matter. Only the results of the mental experiences are handed on to the receptacle, the Karana Sharira of the Atma. Then



comes the time for rebirth into the physical world, and the will to live in that physical world awakens. Ichchha, now desire for physical life, is the impulse which draws another, a new, mental body and a new astral body round their respective permanent particles, and then a new physical body for a fresh sowing, a fresh gaining of experience. Such is the working of the wheel in each of the three worlds, and such its purpose – the gathering of experience, the suffering of the results of evil experience, and the enjoying of the fruitage of the experience of good, assimilated for fuller and richer sowing on the return to earth. Such the logical sequence, such the value of each of the worlds in which the wheel is turning.

Once you realise the place of each in the evolution of the bodies, in the unfolding of the powers of the Jivatma, you will understand the wisdom which built the three worlds, and the use of the turning of the wheel in each. Hence the necessity of births and deaths; every birth is a coming into a world; every death is a passing out of a world. But the death of the lower world is the birth of the higher, for birth and death are relative terms. We die out of this mortal world to be born into the world of the Pretas and Pitrs; we die out of the Pitrloka to be born into the world of the Devas; we die out of the Devas to be born again into this mortal world. So that our passage is a recurring death, from the world which is left, and a recurring birth into the world that is entered. Birth and death are only phrases, used to mark the succession of experiences in the three worlds.

Let us for a moment take the lowest type of man, the Jivatma which has passed through experiences in the mineral kingdom, in the vegetable and in the animal kingdoms, and is born now as a human being. His intellectual powers will be very little unfolded, for only in man, it is written, does the Chit aspect of Ishvara show itself out at all fully, and it is particularly that aspect which now has to be unfolded. The nature of the Jivatma as a reflexion of Ishvara is, we know, three-fold. Jnana is the knowledge-aspect; Ichchha is the will-desire-aspect, and Kriya the activity-aspect. And it is necessary to recognise that those aspects belong to the sunlight, and cannot be given up. When you are told to destroy desire, you do not destroy Ichchha, which is part of the nature of the Jivatma, and answers to the Ananda-aspect of the Saguna Brahman Himself. When you are told to destroy wandering thoughts, the mind which is the Raja of the senses, you do not destroy Jnana, which answers to the Chit-aspect of Brahman. When you are told to destroy activity, you do not destroy Kriya, which answers to the Sat-aspect of Brahman. What then you do is that you destroy the shadow in the lower world, in order that the sunlight of the higher may shine out undimmed. For in the shadow lies the illusion; in the shadow lies the avidya which blinds the Jivatma to his own real nature. This distinction between the higher and the lower must ever be remembered, and then, intellectually at least, the path will be more clear, and the apparently contradictory statements in the Upanishats will receive their perfect reconciliation. For I read to you the other day that the Self cannot be attained by knowledge, and yet presently I shall have to read that the Self is to be found by thinking. And you will become terribly confused, unless you remember the principle of the sunlight and the shadow, and are able to apply the principle in each successive stage, destroying each shadow only when you identify yourself with its sunlight. There will be a stage when each sunlight is seen as the shadow of a yet higher sunlight, until we reach Ishvara Himself; but that stage is not yet for you and for me; that stage is not explained, for we could not understand it in the lower shadow in which we dwell, and for us the Jivatma is the sunlight and this garment of the bodies is the shadow which we must all understand and overcome.

Now take the case of the Jivatma as he lives in a savage. He is everything that he is in you, everything that he is in the Rshi. But he cannot put out any of his powers, because of the density of the matter which clothes him round. What are you to do with him ? He has to learn to know himself as Brahman. But he cannot know himself as Brahman in his present condition, in the grossest Maya of all, in which the Jivatma identifies himself with the physical body, and says: ८ I am this body. I speak, I eat, I drink, I enjoy all the functions of the body; this body is myself ८ And if you tell him: ८ You are not the body ८, he will simply stare at you. You remember how I once quoted to you from Charles Darwin a very good illustration of the difference of ideas between a savage and a civilised man with reference to the word ८ good ८, which to the civilised man has a moral connotation, while to the savage it bears a purely physical one. The savage had eaten his wife, and being told that it was not ८ good ८ to eat a wife, he answered that she was extremely ८ good ८ – as food. Now it is clearly useless to tell such a man that he is Brahman. He has to turn on the wheel. He murders, he robs, he lives promiscuously he thinks that there is nothing wrong in following his desires; he feels no remorse for wrong because he has no ideal of right. He cannot recognise a thing as wrong, because he knows nothing as right. He cannot understand that to follow his physical cravings is an offence against his higher nature, for to him ८ higher nature ८ are words unmeaning, senseless. How shall he learn he is Brahman? He slays, and slays, and slays, and at last he is slain in revenge for the slayings he has wrought. In the next world he raves against his slayer, for he is deprived of all the enjoyments he wants, and he desires to injure him in return; but he cannot, his body is gone. He has no instrument whereby he can touch him. Impotent his wrath, useless his indignation, and presently the germ of mind which is in him begins to work and to understand. Not at once. Over and over and over again, in many lives, must he slay and be slain, before at last the idea will stamp itself on that resistant nature: ८ I have been killed, because I killed ८. He will see the connexion. He will realise that he had made a mistake in killing, that it was a blunder from his own selfish stand-point, because they who kill are killed; and then he learns that lesson by repeated bitter experience, by the turning of the wheel. He thinks: ८ This is the result of what I did ८. There is built into his mental body the idea that killing is undesirable, prevents happiness, shortens the life of the killer, is ८ wrong ८; that idea is handed on to the Karana Sharira, and is built into the next mental body, and in the brain is reflected the innate idea that killing is wrong, an idea that quickly responds to the teacher, forbidding murder. That is what he has gained by this revolution of the wheel – the power to see that a thing is wrong when he is told it from outside. That is the difference between your children and the children of savages. In a new body they are all ignorant. All have to learn ८ this is right ८, ८ this is wrong ८, from outside. But one child answers to teaching, because of the knowledge and experience that he has brought back with him, while the other cannot respond. With the one, you have not to argue for a moment. You see it. He sees it. But he only sees it because he has been through the experience of that wrong over and over again. The child of the savage does not see it, and does not answer to it, and will dispute and argue with you, because his experience is too limited and insufficient to be impressed upon the new mental body. It is thus that the worlds are linked, and in this way the unfolding powers of the Jivatma find better and better organs in the new bodies obtained in birth after birth.

Now let us pause on that element of the nature, where I said that you may apparently find contradiction. Let us first take desire. All the powers of the desire-nature have to be drawn out; hence man is plunged into a world full of objects which awaken desires, and on tasting them he feels pleasure and pain. These experiences influence rebirth, for it is written: ८ Whoever, thinking of forms, desires them, is by his desires born here and there ८. [Mundaka III ii 2]

Man, it is said, “is desire-formed ८ ढक, shaped by desire, and again, that a man's desires carry him to the place where the forms are found which gratify those desires. For Purusha himself is of the nature of desire. ८ ढकThis Purusha” , says the *Brhadaranyakopanishat*, ८ ढकhas desire for his nature ८ ढक. He becomes attached to worldly objects attained by himself, and having arrived at the last of the works which he performed, he goes from one world to another by these, and thus he who desires wanders from world to world. [Brhadar IV iv 5, 6] So long as these desires exist and desire, we are told, is the nature of the Purusha, so long he must wander from world to world. How then is he to get away from this continual wandering, if he must go whither his desires lead him ? For we must remember that desires for astral things, or for Svargaloka, guide him to the astral world, or to heaven, as much as the desires for physical objects lead him back to this world; desires for objects in the astral world with a stronger chain, are more subtle, than those which bind us here; and if we desire the joys of heaven, the gladness of the Devas, the feasts of the Svarga world, these are still stronger, still more subtle’ and by all these are we bound to the wheel of births and deaths. Hence it is written in the *Kathopanishat*; “When all the desires refuted in the heart are loosened, then the mortal becomes immortal . . .when all the bonds of the heart are torn asunder, then the mortal becomes immortal” . [Katha vi 14, 15] And so we begin to realise that desires must in some way be shaken off; but how can this be with a Purusha whose nature is desire? All desires have to be destroyed save the desire for the Self. That one desire must remain, for that is of the nature of the Self. The love of the Self for itself is its own very nature; and that remains in the sunlight when all the shadows of desire for the lower worlds have gone. The desires that here you know, they belong to the bodies and pass with the bodies; the desire for the Self ever remains, and by that, which leads to Self-realization, you become immortal.

Let us turn to thought, the Jnana-aspect which here we know manifested as mind, the aspect of consciousness in the mental body. ८ ढकMan ८ ढक, again it is written, ८ ढकhis thought-made ८ ढक. [Chhandogya III xiv I] For each aspect of the Self created its own form. Hence ८ ढकdesire or willformed ८ ढक, and ८ ढकthought-formed ८ ढक is man, and ८ ढकactivity-formed ८ ढक also. And you remember how the passage as to thought is completed: ८ ढकMan is thought-made. As he thinks in this world, so he becomes in the next world. Therefore, let him think on Brahman ८ ढक. Right thought is the way to the breaking of the bonds which are woven by wrong thought. So long as we think of ourselves as the body, we shall be bound in the body; so long as we think of ourselves as the mind, we shall be bound in the mind; so long as we think of ourselves as the lower, we shall remain in the lower. So also when we think of ourselves as the Self we shall become the Self; and hence it is written, in one of those verses that ought not to confuse the careful student, though thought contradictory by the careless, that the Self, the hidden nature of all beings, is beheld by the attentive subtle intellect of men of subtle sight, and it is written: ८ ढकNone sees this by the eye; by the heart, by the will, by the mind, he is obtained ८ ढक. ८ ढकNot by the eye may he be seized, nor also by the voice, nor by any senses, nor by Tapas, nor rites; by meditation he is seen, the partless, when the intellect is purified by limpid wisdom. This subtle Self is to be known by the intelligence, pervaded the five-fold life; every mind of creatures by the lives [senses] is pervaded; in this, purified, the Self reveals himself ८ ढक. [Mundaka III i 8, 9] Although the Self may not gained by thought of the shadow, it may be gained by thought, when the shadow is known as shadow, ८ ढकand when the Self who has the nature of knowledge ८ ढक [Brhadar IV ii 6] shines out undimmed; therefore it is necessary that a man should develop the higher mind, even though the lower mind be his obstacle and his foe. The higher mind, united with Buddhi, the Pure Reason, the Wisdomaspect of the Self can know the Self. Notice the significance of the shlokas just quoted, which speak of the five-fold Prana pervading the

intelligence; as we saw yesterday, Prana is Prajna in its higher aspect, and when it withdraws itself from the senses and enters Prajna, intellect, the lower sense-pervaded mind is left lifeless. When Jnana is realised, the Wisdom-aspect of the Self is seen.

We come to the third aspect, the aspect of Kriya, activity, resulting in works. Again it is written:   
 ८ ऋAs he acts, as he behaves, so he becomes ८ ऋ. [Ibid iv 5] The Self is activity-made, as well as will-made and thought-made. And to get rid of this chain of works, he must know that it is not he who works, but the Self that is working in him. When his works become sacrifices, their binding nature is destroyed. [Bhagavadgita iv 23]

Understanding then, at least partly, the theory of the binding to the wheel of births and deaths, by the chains of desire, of thought, and of activity, we must ask: how shall liberation be attained? The Upanishat tells us of the relation between sleep and death, and how a man does not really cease to be, in either. It is written in the *Kaushitakibrahmanopanishat* that when in sleep we see a man lying bereft of speech, of sight, and so on, all his faculties have been withdrawn into Prana, and carried out of the body into another world. When he wakes, as sparks go out in all directions from a blazing fire, so from the Self the Pranas go forth to their several stations in the physical body. The same thing is repeated, when a teacher and a pupil see a sleeping man and awaken him; the teacher explains that when a man sleeps, he is dwelling in a place thin as a hair divided into a thousand parts – our ८ ऋweb of life ८ ऋ – and into Prana the speech enters with all names, the sight with all forms, the hearing with all sounds, the mind with all thoughts; and again the same simile is repeated, that, when he wakes, as from a blazing fire sparks go forth in all directions, so from the Self the Pranas go forth to their several stations. They penetrate to the very nails and the hairs of the skin. Thus the Atma enters the body, and all the Pranas with it. [Kaushitakibrahmanopanishat iii 3 and iv 18] The *Brhadaranyakopanishat* tells us that it is not true that the sleeper does not see, nor smell, taste, nor speak, nor hear, nor think, nor touch, nor know; for there can be no loss of sight to the seer, who is indestructible, nor loss of other senses, since the Self is the only seer, and hearer, and thinker, and, out of the physical body, he enjoys, all his faculties, as in it. For there is no second, no other, separate from him, in whom these powers reside. [Loc cit IV iii 23-30 summarised] The return of the Self with the Pranas is then the waking from sleep. It is the symbol of waking from death. For as the same *Kaushitakibrahmanopanishat* tells us, when we look at the man who is dying, and the people who are around him, and who see him slowly die, say: ८ ऋHe does not speak, he does not hear, he does not think ८ ऋ, then it is that he is being absorbed into Prana, and all these things enter into Prana; the speech enters it, the eye enters it, the ear enters it, the mind enters it, and when the man ८ ऋdeparts from this body, he departs with all these ८ ऋ. All names are alive in him, all odors are alive in him, all forms are alive in him; all these are alive in him, and, going from the body, he carries with him all that he has. [Loc cit iii 3, 4 summarised] Similarly the *Brhadaranyakopanishat* says that at death the Self seizes the Pranas: and enters the heart; the entrance to the heart becomes luminous, and the Self leaves the body by the eye, or the head, or some other part. ८ ऋWhen he goes, the life follows him; when life goes, all the lives follow it; he becomes knowledge, with knowledge he departs; wisdom, works, and knowledge of the past pervade him ८ ऋ. Having thrown off the body, he takes another, suitable to the particular region to which he goes. [Loc cit iv 1 – 4 summarised] As with the sleeper, so with the so-called dead. There is no destruction for the seer, the hearer, the thinker. He is the only one who truly sees, and hears, and thinks.

But in death there are two paths, the Pitryana and Devayana, the path of the Pitrs and the path of the Gods. These are very carefully described for us in the passages which I will now summarise; they are found in the *Brhadaranyaka*, *Chhandogya*, and *Prashna* Upanishats. [ *Brhadar* VI ii 2-16; *Chhandogya* V ii *Prashna* i 9, 10] Every word that indicates darkness – smoke, cloud, dark fortnight, etc. – implies bondage to matter, and is used for the path of the Pitrs, whereby they go who return to rebirth; every word that indicates light implies the triumph of the Self, and is used for the path of the Devas by which they go who return not. So long as the man is blinded by matter, so long he must tread the road by which he returns. And that road is from the earth into the Preta region of Kamaloka; thence to Pitrloka; from Pitrloka to the Moon, which is the gate of Svarga; he abides in Svarga till he has eaten the fruit of his earth-experiences; and when the time comes for return, the Devas offer  $\text{वृषिः}$  faith  $\text{वृषिः}$ , the vivified permanent mental unit, in the heavenly fire, and from the fire King Soma, the new mental body, comes forth. The Devas bear that, with the astral permanent atom, into the water, the astral plane, and the new astral body is formed. The Devas carry him to the earth, and he becomes food; it means that the physical permanent atom, which goes with you through all births and deaths – the particle which is the germ of every new body that you may wear, that always remains and draws round it, by the helping of the Devas, the materials of which the new and appropriate body is formed – enters into the earth, and passes into some form of food, and by the food it enters into the father, and from the father it passes to the mother, and there the new physical body is built. Thus is this path traced for us, stage by stage, though the mystic words used may make it difficult to follow without explanation.

Thus along Pitryana, and back through the various stages of the five fires – the fire of heaven, the fire of Parjanya, the fire of earth, the fire of man and the fire of woman – the man comes back again into this world of men, and so he must go round and round, so long as he treads that path. But there is another path, the Devayana. What is that? All words meaning light, as we have said, describe that path. It is the fire, it is the lightning, it is the bright fortnight, it is the northern path of the sun. The man is in the body of light, not in the body of the shadow; when the man has risen into the radiant body, the Augoeides, then he goes along the path of light. The shadow to the shadow, and the light to the light. So long as you think the shadow to be yourself, so long you must follow the path of the shadow, of the smoke, of the cloud, of any object by which you may describe the material side of things; but when you realise yourself as the Self, not as matter, not as form, then you belong to the light side of the world, the Spirit side, to all that is brilliant, and in a body of light you go to the source of light, and verily you return not again.

Such are the paths; what are the conditions which lead us to tread the one or the other of them? For this, after all, is the most vital question for you and for me. The stages are very very clear; clear they are, but easy they are not. Live the life of unity, realise that you are the Self, and that the Self is one.  $\text{वृषिः}$  From death to death  $\text{वृषिः}$  for  $\text{वृषिः}$  life in matter is death  $\text{वृषिः}$ ; [ H.P. Blavatsky] we say that he passes from birth to birth, but the true seer says that he passes from death to death. Man only becomes immortal when he realises his own nature.

$\text{वृषिः}$  Whoever sees variety in Him proceeds from death to death.  $\text{वृषिः}$  [ *Brhadar* IV 19 ]  $\text{वृषिः}$  He proceeds from death to death who beholdeth difference.  $\text{वृषिः}$  [ *Katha* iv II ]  $\text{वृषिः}$  As a mirror,

earth-soiled, made clean, shines as though made of light, so the dweller in the body, having seen the true nature of the Self, becomes one, pain ceases. ८ [Shvetashvatara ii 14]

In order that we may have courage to go through the long struggle of births and deaths, the Upanishat declares that ८ The Self is to be known ८. [Mundaka iii 9] For man cannot work for that which he feels to be entirely out of his reach, and he must first gain the conviction that the finding of the Self is possible, before he will enter the path at the end of which he will win his freedom. First of all, then, you need the inner conviction of the Self, and of his finding. The further steps are given on the whole most definitely and clearly in the *Kathopanishat*. No man may find the Self who has not ८ ceased from evil ways ८. [Katha ii 24] That is the second step. So long as a man follows an evil way and loves it, so long the Self is hidden from him by a cloud that he may not pierce. He may be weak, faulty, may still make many an error and stumble, but he must see them as stumbles and errors, before he can be said to have ceased from evil ways; he must see wrong as wrong, he must recognise it, must repudiate it, must say: ८ It is not I. ८ And when he has so repudiated evil, he must subdue his senses, he must concentrate his intellect; for the unsubdued may not obtain the Self, nay, not even by knowledge – a warning to any one who thinks that intellectual appreciation without purity and self-control can mean the realisation of the Self. A man who has not ceased from evil does not attain the Self, even by knowledge. ८ This they call yoga, the firm subduing of the senses. ८ [Katha vi II] So also the *Kenopanishat* says that the means of obtaining the Self are ८ restraint, subdual, work ८. [Loc Cit iv 8] Restraint of the desires; subdual of the mind; work for the purification of the body; when a man is thus striving, then he may understand the steps in his own nature by which he rises. The *Taittiriyanishat* gives them: ८ Body, life, mind, knowledge, bliss ८. [Loc cit II viii] These words describe the passing through the various stages of the shadow on the way to the sunlight. The body; that must be purified, and the man must cease to identify himself with his body; looking at the body, he must be able to say by life as well as lips: ८ This is not I ८. The lower life, the Prana, the desire-nature; he identifies himself with that; he must learn to separate himself from that, from the whole desire-nature, and he must say to the desire-nature: ८ This is not I ८; and once again he must say it by life as well as lips. Then he must learn to say of the ever-wandering and vagrant mind: ८ This is not I ८; and he must learn this by concentration, by meditation, by the fixing of the thoughts, and thus free himself from its bondage. And then comes the body of knowledge, as it is called, Buddhi, the Pure Reason; he must learn to say of this: ८ This is not I ८, great as it is. Then he obtains the body of Atma, Aham, which is the place of joy; and even of that he must say: ८ this also is not I ८, for the ८ I ८ must go. The time comes when he says only: ८ The Self is all ८. And similarly to these outlines of the *Taittiriya*, is it said in the *Kathopanishat*: ८ Let the wise subdue his speech by mind (manas); subdue his mind by reason (buddhi); subdue his reason by the great (atma); subdue this in the peaceful (monad) ८ [Loc cit iii 13]. Higher than the Monad is only Ishvara, the Purusha; ८ than this naught is higher; He is the last limit, He the supreme goal. ८ [Ibid ii; II] There are the stages. Free yourself from the senses, by identifying yourself with the mind, Then repudiate the mind by identifying yourself with Buddhi, the Reason. Then repudiate Buddhi, and identify yourself with Atma. Repudiate even that as a shadow, and identify yourself with the Monad, the true Jivatma. And then, casting that away, identify yourself with Ishvara, the Supreme. It is written that when a man beholds ८ Ishvara, ८ he obtains the highest identity. ८ [Mundaka III i 3]

You see now why it is said that the Self is gained by thinking, and also not by thinking. The thinking which is effective is the thought which identifies itself with the life, and not with the form. And it must not be the saying, but the living; and what does that mean, after all ? It means that in the midst of the body we live as though bodiless; that all the movements of the outer objects lying around us, which give joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, which elate and which depress, which encourage and which menace, that all these cease to have any power, because we say by our life, not by our lips: ८ ढ्ढ The senses are not myself, I am not they. ८ ढ्ढ It means with regard to the mind, that the thoughts that harass and distress, and the thoughts that encourage and delight, the play of the mind, the joys of the intellect, the rapture of intellectual creation, and the splendor of imaginative power, are repudiated: ८ ढ्ढ These are not mine; they cannot shake me, they cannot move me, they cannot attract me, and they cannot repel me ८ ढ्ढ. Many have reached the stage where they can say that things do not attract them, but few are they who can say that nothing repels them, and they must no more repel than attract. For repulsion is as much a bond on the Self as is attraction, and while you are repelled by any living thing, you are not free. You are still, by repulsion, under the domination of outer objects; you have not ceased to identify yourself with them.

Thus, step by step, strive to pierce into your Self, and if you would begin the search, begin with everyday life. You have a tongue, sight, hearing. Dominate the tongue, and let it never speak an unkind or untrue word; no harsh language, no sharp criticism, no claim to judge your brother, no claim to condemn. Speech is a power of the Self, and is degraded and prostituted when under the control of outer objects, and directed by the attractions and repulsions of the lower world. Master the eye and ear, teaching the eye to see the Self, and not the Maya which encompasses it, to pierce through the Maya which surrounds your brother, and see behind it the Self, who ८ ढ्ढ makes his own path, according to the Word ८ ढ्ढ.

My brothers, we judge the path of others; far better that we ,confine ourselves to our own path, and try to tread that aright; when I say of my brother that he follows an evil path and therefore that he should be despised and condemned, am I not seeing the outer and not the inner ? His Self may know that that path which to me is evil is the path which is needed to give him the experience that he lacks; perchance, until he has had that experience he is bound and not free, and the Self chooses that path in order that experience may be gained which shall break some fetter that still binds him. Therefore, though I may say that such and such a thing is wrong and degrading, I may not say that that Self is treading an evil path. For though he be blinded by Maya, the Self is unsullied thereby; he rejects evil as well as good, and takes all as fruits of experience, which he seizes for his own purposes, while he chooses his own way.

The greater things you can begin to do afterwards. Do these smaller things first; for what is the use of talking of the higher path, when the first steps in the lower are not yet taken ? therefore is it written: ८ ढ्ढ Let a man cease from evil ways ८ ढ्ढ. Until he does so cease, his eyes are blinded, and he cannot see. A man must curb his tongue. He who likes to hear unkind criticism and cruel gossip, and who will not see the Self in all, cannot expect that the shadow will begin to fall away, and allow the glory of the Self to be a little more visible. For I would not leave this subject, which some may call too metaphysical and unpractical, without showing you that the truly practical comes out of the metaphysical, that out of right thinking comes right living, and out of right understanding comes right loving. In truth, the truest thinking means the truest living, and if I

have taken up your time on this occasion with what is called an unpractical subject, it is because I believe that, in the order of nature, out of the subtle comes the gross, and not out of the gross the subtle. Not out of right practice comes right thinking, but out of right thinking comes right practice. Right belief is of enormous importance. It is not true that it does not matter what a man believes. It is not true to say, as many say, that a man's beliefs do not matter, it is only his conduct which is of importance; no lasting right conduct grows out of wrong belief. Where the root is rotten, the tree is doomed to death. ८३८८ As a man thinks, so he becomes. ८३८९ The idea that conduct is everything, and thought nothing, is a reaction from the opposite extreme, which made, not right thinking, but orthodox belief the standard by which a man was judged. There was a time when free thought was punished, and when good conduct was no excuse, nay, was thought an aggravation, of what was called heresy. There is no such thing as heresy; for no man is another man's judge and master in any sphere of thought, whether in the sphere of religion, in the sphere of politics, in the sphere of morals, in the sphere of philosophy. Thought must be free and unfettered, otherwise you will have stagnation and death. But because that is true, do not make the illogical deduction: ८३९० It does not matter what I think ८३९१. It matters enormously what you think. If you think falsely, you will act mistakenly; if you think basely, your conduct will suit your thinking. So think your noblest, your highest, your purest. Think the best you can, and not the worst. Aim high, for the higher the arrow is aimed, the higher the mark it hits. Keep your own ideals lofty, while you keep your judgment of others charitable; and your ideals shall lift you, and your charity shall raise your fallen brother. For never yet did a man rise by being trampled on. Man only rises by being loved in the midst of his sins and follies, and as we deal with our brethren, so do Those who are above us deal with our outer selves. Such our final lesson, and I finish with the words of the Upanishat: ८३९२ The embodied Self, beholding his real nature, obtains his true end, and every pain ceaseth ८३९३. [*Shvetashvatara* ii 14]

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## APPENDIX TO LECTURE II

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I have gratefully to thank Babu Biresvar Banerji, Professor at the Central Hindu College, Benares, for the following passages, gathered by him out of various Samskrit works. They will prove very useful and instructive to the student.

### **The Multiplicity of Īshvaras**

From the *Suta Samhita*

ॐ Him the Parameshvara, the Ishvara of all Ishvaras.

Shloka II, Chap. VII, Shiva Mahatma.

ॐ Countless are the Brahmas, 0 greatest of Panditas, that go into laya, countless Vishnus, Rudras and Indras. ॐ

Shloka 28, Chap. IX, Shiva Mahatma.

ॐ Countless murtis of Brahma are born from differences of gunas; countless murtis of Vishnu and Isha. ॐ

Shloka 33, Do. Do.

From the *Shiva Purana*:

ॐ There hundreds of thousands of Rudras and hundreds of millions of Vishnus, 'by the grace of Shiva, are playing and enjoying themselves freed from sin. ॐ

Shloka 6. Chap. XI. Sanatkumara Samhita.

ॐ There Mahadeva – the Deva, the Supreme Kala, the Supreme Ishvara, the Creator of all lives –resides surrounded by Maheshvaras. ॐ

26. Do. Do.

ॐ The Deva (Shiva) became surrounded by Rudras shining like the morning sun. ॐ

12.

ॐ His second following twice the size (of the first) (consists of) three hundred millions of Rudras of the color of gold. ॐ

13.

ॐ Another, O greatest of Dvijas, (consists of) eight hundred millions (of Rudras) of fresh color. ॐ

14.

ॐ The fifth following is again twice as large. Attend to Rudras of the sixth and seventh following. They are all shining, purified, full of Ananda always. ॐ

15.

ॐ The eighth following of the Supreme Atma are on His manasa plane; any certain knowledge of it is beyond (our) power. It can only be discussed by analogy. They are all preceded by Brahmas; all preceded by Vishnus.

16. 17. Chap. XII. Do.

"I am, O dearest, the Ishvara of all Ishvaras, in creating, in dissolving, in giving, wherefore I am Parameshvara. ॐ

Chap. XXX. 35. Do.

ॐ This condensed vast Egg is the womb wherein Brahma is born; it is referred to as the field of Brahma, who is said to be the Knower of the field. ॐ

ॐ Know that of such Eggs thousands of billions (exist). Pradhana being present in all space they exist upwards, downwards, horizontally, and in every one of them are Brahmas, Haris, Bhavas, created by Pradhana by its having obtained the neighborhood of Shambhu. ॐ Chap. VIII. 40-43. Vaya Samhita.

From the *Devi Bhagavata*:

ॐ O Mother, O Bhavani, O Thou of great power, neither I nor Bhava nor Virinshi (Brahma) ever knew Thy nature unknowable; who else knows ? Who can say how many other worlds exist in this Thy marvellous design ? ॐ

35.

व ढ् In this universe of Thine we have seen other Hari, Shiva and Lotus-born (Brahma). That in other universes they do not exist, how can we know ? Thy great power is limitless. व ढ्

36. Chap. IV. Skandha iii.

व ढ् As the multiplicity of the Jiva is by Maya, not self-initiated, so the multiplicity of Ishvara is by Maya, not self-initiated. व ढ्

9. Chap. XXXIII. Skandha vii.

"Ishvaras are, however, the Rulers and Lords of Brahmas, Vishnus, Rudras, Virats, in all the universes. The Lord of Them all, in the manner hereinafter described, is Shri Krishna in the form of Gopalasundari.

व ढ्' *Commentary of Nilakantha* on Shloka 61. Chap III. Skanda ix.

व ढ् Thus in every pore of the hairs of His body are universes; in every universe are secondary (Kshudra) Virat, Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, and others. व ढ्

61,

व ढ् In this way how many and varied have been the creations and layas, and how many are the kalpas past and future – who can tell this number ? व ढ्

76. [Page iv] Of creations, layas, Brahmandas, Brahmas and others who can tell the number ?

व ढ् 77.

व ढ् Of all Brahmandas the one Ishvara is He. व ढ्

78.

### **The Evolution of Īshvaras**

From the *Suta Ishvaras*:

ॐ By an infinitesimal part of His grace thou hast won thy office of Vishnu. ॐ

Shloka 14. Chap. II. Shiva Mahatma.

From the *Shiva Purana*:

ॐ Of those who have attained unity in murti some Shivas are at the top of the Path ॐ.

68.

ॐ The Maheshvaras are in the middle (of the Path), the Rudras however occupy the station of those that are wanting in experience. ॐ

69.

From the *Devi Bhagavata*:

ॐ These two, Nara and Narayana, have attained siddhi in tapas; they are a part of mine. ॐ

Chap. ix. 3. 4.

ॐ All the other Devis are worshipped because they have served Shakti. As is the tapas of each, so is the result in each case, O Muni. ॐ

100.

“Durga, for one thousand Deva years having made tapas in the Himalaya, and meditated upon her Feet, came to be worshipped by all. ॐ

101.

ॐ Sarasvati, for one hundred thousand Deva years having made tapas in the Gandhamadava mountain, came to be adored by all. ॐ

102.

ॐ Lakshmi, for one hundred Deva yugas having made tapas in Pushkara, and having served Devi, evolved to be the Giver of all wealth. ॐ

108.

ॐ Savitri, for sixty thousand Deva years having made tapas in the Malaya mountain, and meditated upon Her Feet, became worthy of worship. ॐ

104.

ॐ One hundred manvantaras did Shankara, Vibhu, make tapas. ॐ

105.

ॐ For a hundred manvantaras, having made supreme tapas, did Shri Krshna obtain Goloka, wherein to this day He rejoices”

107. Chap. VIII. Skanda ix.

Prof. Banerji remarks that: ॐ It is evident that Narayana is an evolving Logos in what may be called a human body – a body made of that order of matter of which human bodies are made; and that Nara is also a murti in which a Logos of the same order is evolving, although it is not so far advanced as the Narayana body.

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